

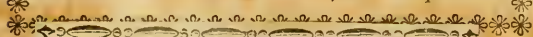


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THE
CURE of DEISM:
OR, THE
Mediatorial Scheme
BY
JESUS CHRIST
The ONLY TRUE RELIGION.

IN ANSWER to the OBJECTIONS started, and to
the very imperfect Account of *The Religion of NATURE*, and
of CHRISTIANITY, given by the Two Oracles of DEISM,
the AUTHOR of *Christianity as old as the Creation*; and the
AUTHOR of the *Characteristicks*.

WITH
An APPLICATION to *Papists, Quakers,*
Socinians, and Scepticks.

AND
An APPENDIX, in ANSWER to a Book en-
titled, *The Moral Philosopher*, or a Dialogue between
a Christian Deist and a Christian Jew.

In TWO VOLUMES.

The Second Edition, corrected and improved with large Additions.

In a NEW METHOD.

By a COUNTRY CLERGYMAN.

VOL. II.

By E. Smith

*I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.
Ye believe in GOD, believe also in ME.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR; and Sold by W. INNYS and
R. MANBY, at the West-End of St. Paul's.

M.DCC.XXXVII.



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P. A. H. C H A P.



CHAP. XV.

Of the INWARD AIDS of the Christian Religion.



THE Author of *Christianity as* CHAP.
old, &c. has given so imper- XV.
fect an Account both of Na-
tural Religion, and of Chri-
stianity, as in a manner to be
totally silent as to the *internal*
Aids, external Motives, and
the Helps and Instruments that

appertain to Religion ; necessarily arising out of the Nature of Things, as Man is a religious, sociable Creature, and of a weak impotent Nature, strong Passions and unruly Affections, great Hindrances of Religion. The first is a new *Advocate* to the Regent Power of Man's Actions ; the second is a *Balance* to the Passions ; and the third mightily promotes Religion as he is a *sociable* Creature. I shall endeavour to supply his Defects, and treat of each of them.

FIRST, of INTERNAL AIDS : It does not comport with our Author's vain-glorious Principle, the *All-sufficiency* of human Reason to attain the Favour of God in all Circumstances of Opportunity, as well in Heathen as Christian Religions, to admit of this. For, as they scorn ex-

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ternal Assistance of a Revelation from God; or, which is the same thing, every part of it, but what is a Republication of the Law of Nature, which they call their internal Revelation; they are above being beholden to this, the Promise and Assurance whereof is only derivable from that Revelation they reject. Besides, this Author * denies it to be consistent with the Goodness of God, to permit such a subtle evil Spirit as the *Devil* to tempt Mankind; which not only frustrates the Use of such a *Counter Aid* of the good Spirit against him, but seems to deny the Being of the Devil, or God's Governance over him, and us.

YET the Heathen Philosophers were perfectly sensible of their want of this Assistance, which they thought necessary as well for *knowing the Truth*, as for enabling them *to do good*, as might be made appear from variety of Instances †; and in their Sense of the want of it, they likewise panted after a Revelation of the Will of Heaven; insomuch that in reference to such sensible Wants the Language of Scripture imputes that to be a *Desire* in them, which they explicitly knew nothing of. Thus the *Messiah* is called *the Desire of all Nations* ‡, and the Expectation of the *Gentiles* ||; and the *Creature*, general Mankind, to be in *earnest Expectation to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption,—the Redemption of the Body from the Grave* †: Both which Desire and Expectation, so good and advantageous to the Human Creature, the *modern* Deists unnaturally

* Page 351, 352.

† Which are well collected in *Histoire de la Philosophie Payenne*, Tome Premier 8vo, 1724, p. 374 to 389. Vid. *Alnetan Quæst.* Lib. XI. c. 10. ‡ Hag.

ii. 7.

|| Gen. xlix. 10.

† Rom. viii. 19,

21, 23.

disclaim. So lost, and so much worse is the Condition of those who contemn, than of those who never had the use of Revelation.

IF they would reconcile themselves to the Sentiments of the wisest and most sensible ancient Philosophers in this matter, they might, by an easy Transition, be brought to the Acknowledgment of *Revelation* by the same Spirit; the written Word of which, in the Opinion of some Christians, affords such effectual Assistance, as to supersede the occasion of inward Aid. The first may be called the *still small external Voice* wherein God is present, and more certainly so than in Earthquakes, and Whirlwinds; yet it is most certain, he is moreover *inwardly* present by his Holy Spirit. But as long as they reject both, they evidently make it appear, that they have a Perverseness in Principle, and Degeneracy of Reason beyond common Mortals.

I SHALL here take an occasion to quote some Passages from Dr. *Samuel Clark*. “ In Experience and Practice it hath appeared to be altogether impossible, for Philosophy and bare Reason to reform Mankind effectually without the Assistance of some higher Principle.—So that without some greater Help and Assistance Mankind is plainly *left in a very bad State*. “ Indeed in the original uncorrupted State of human Nature, before the Mind of Man was depraved with prejudiced Opinions, corrupt Affections, and vicious Inclinations, Customs and Habits, right Reason may justly be supposed to have been a sufficient Guide, and a Principle powerful enough to preserve Men in the constant Practice of their Duty: But in the present Circumstances and Condition of Mankind, the wisest and most sensible of the

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“ Philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain, that they found the *Understanding* of Men so dark and cloudy, their *Wills* so bias’d and inclined to Evil, their *Passions* so outrageous and rebelling against Reason, that they look’d upon the Rules and Laws of right Reason, as very hardly practicable, and which they had very little Hope of ever being able to persuade the World to submit to: In a Word, they confessed that human Nature was strangely corrupted, and acknowledged this Corruption to be a Disease, whereof they knew not the true Cause, and could not find out a sufficient Remedy: So that the great Duties of Religion were laid down by them as Matters of *Speculation* and *Dispute*, rather than as the Rules of Action; and not so much urged upon the Hearts and Lives of Men, as proposed to the Admiration of those, who thought them scarce possible to be effectually practised by the generality of Men. To remedy all these Disorders, and conquer all these Corruptions, there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural Assistance, which was above bare Reason and Philosophy to procure, and yet without which the Philosophers themselves were sensible there could never be any truly great and good Men: *Nemo unquam vir magnus sine Divino Afflatu fuit* *.” Cicero.

HE had before † given a beautiful Description of the Corruption of Nature from Tully as the Ground of this Assistance. *If we had come into the World in such Circumstances, as that we could have clearly and distinctly discerned Nature herself,*

* *Evid. of Nat. Rel. &c.* p. 238, 239, 240.

† Pag. 196, 197.

and have been able in the Course of our Lives to follow her true and uncorrupted Directions; this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of Teaching and Instruction. But now Nature has given us only some small Sparks of right Reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt Opinions, and evil Practices, that the true Light of Nature no where appears: As soon as we are brought into the World, immediately we dwell in the midst of all Wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and foolish Opinions; so that we seem to suck in Error even with our Nurses Milk: Afterwards when we return to our Parents and are committed to Tutors; then we are further stocked with such variety of Errors, that Truth becomes perfectly overwhelm'd with Vanity; and the most natural Sentiments of our Minds are entirely stifled with confirm'd Follies: But when after all this we enter into the World, and make the Multitude, conspiring every where in Wickedness, our great Guide and Example; then our very Nature itself is wholly transform'd, as it were, into corrupt Opinions.

Now * this Divine Assistance is vouchsafed to
 “ Men under the Christian Dispensation in such
 “ a manner, as appears to be undeniably agree-
 “ able to the natural Expectations of right Rea-
 “ son, and suitable to the best and worthiest
 “ Notions, that Men have ever by the Light of
 “ Nature been able to frame to themselves con-
 “ cerning the Attributes and Perfections of God.
 “ If ye, says our Saviour, *being evil, know how to*
 “ *give good Gifts unto your Children, how much*
 “ *more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy*
 “ *Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke xi. 13. The

* Pag. 280, 281.

CHAP. “ Effects of this Divine Assistance evidenced
 XV. “ itself in a very visible and remarkable manner
 “ in the primitive Times, by the sudden, won-
 “ derful and total Reformation of far greater
 “ Numbers of wicked Men, than ever were
 “ brought to Repentance by the Teaching and
 “ Exhortation of all the Philosophers in the
 “ World *.”

I PRODUCE one Authority more, Mr. *Locke*.
 “ I am far, says he, from denying, that God
 “ can or doth sometimes enlighten Mens Minds
 “ in the apprehending of certain Truths; or
 “ excite them to good Actions, by the immediate
 “ Influence and Assistance of the Holy Spirit.”
 And on *Rom. viii. 8.* “ ’Tis the Spirit of God
 “ alone that enlivens Men, so as to enable them
 “ to cast off the Dominion of their Lusts.”
 And on *v. ii.* “ Here he [the Apostle] shews,
 “ that Christians are deliver’d from their carnal
 “ sinful Lusts, by the Spirit of God, that is
 “ given to them, and dwells in them as a new
 “ quickening Principle and Power, by which
 “ they are put into a State of Spiritual Life,
 “ wherein their Members are made capable of
 “ being made Instruments of Righteousness.”
 “ To these I must add one Advantage more
 “ we have by Jesus Christ, and that is the Pro-
 “ mise of Assistance. If we do what we can,
 “ he will give us his Spirit to help us to do
 “ what, and how we should. ’Twill be idle for
 “ us, who know not how our own Spirits move
 “ and act us, to ask in what manner the Spirit

* As appears by that of *Orig. adver. Cels. Lib. I. Παρε-
 μέν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εἰ ης, &c.* And that of *Lactant. Lib. III. Da
 mibi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus; pau-
 cissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem reddam. Da
 libidinosum, &c.*

“ of God shall work upon us. The Wisdom
“ that accompanies that Spirit knows better than
“ we how we are made, and how to work upon
“ us. If a wise Man knows how to prevail on
“ his Child, to bring him to what he desires ;
“ can we suspect that the Spirit and Wisdom of
“ God should fail in it, though we perceive or
“ comprehend not the Ways of his Operations ?
“ Christ has promised who is faithful and just,
“ and we cannot doubt of the Performance*.”

THAT Spirits act upon Spirits there can be
as little doubt, as that Bodies act upon Bodies :
And that there are certain ways of silent
Communication, Insinuation, or Suggestion of
Thoughts or Ideas, the Spring of Alteration,
and proper Spheres of giving or receiving Im-
pression, according to the Rank and Capacity
of the Spirit giving, or receiving it ; as there
are Laws of Motion with respect to Bodies, and
their Sphere : And that the supreme Governor
superintends them both. And, as in his Go-
vernment of the natural World every thing
depends upon his immediate Influence, and the
constant Renewal of that Influence, for the Pre-
servation and Direction of their Motion, ac-
cording to their Nature ; so, in his Government
of the moral World, it is consonant to natural
Faith to believe, that moral Agents depend
upon the Influence of his *regular* Concurrence,
and *ordinary* Assistance in a way suitable to their
Nature and Faculties, and the Liberty they are
invested with. Consequently, that the HOLY
SPIRIT may impress our Spirits with such
Thoughts and Cogitations as are the Seeds of
good Actions ; as certainly, as the evil Spirit

* *Reasonabl. of Christ.* p. 239.

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insinuates and injects such Motions and Ideas, as are the certain Beginning of Sin and Wickedness, if not timely resisted and suppress'd; and so become an Aider, Advocate, and Comforter to us against the Vigilance of evil Spirits, the Importance of Temptations, and the Unreadiness of our own moral Powers. It is reasonable to believe, whereas they who chuse evil Courses, and side themselves in Opposition, don't want a superior Power, *spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, to animate and carry them on to all Vice and Depravity; that they who follow God, and prefer his ways of Virtue, Truth, and Liberty, most certainly have an *Encourager* and *Promoter* of their Cause, superior to the other, for carrying them on in Virtue unto Glory. As the evil Spirit is vigilant and intent upon deceiving the Understanding, corrupting the Will, and tempting the Affections; so the Holy Spirit is more careful and present than the *Dæmon* of *Socrates*, to check and *dissuade* all those who desire his Aids and cultivate his Assistance, from what is wrong and unhappy in the Event. And if *Christians* would be faithful to that heavenly Monitor against Evil and Advocate for Good, it wou'd be equivalent to the original Strength and Genius of Man's Understanding, Will, and Affections, which have severally faulter'd, and been weaken'd with Sin.

MOREOVER, the Mediator helps and honours Worm Man, whom he stoop'd to visit and redeem, with the Ministration of elect *Angels*, Fellow Servants of a superior Order, upon occasional Guards and Services. We are sure, tho' we need none to help us to offend God, from Matter of Fact of sad Experience, that there are suddenly and imperceptibly, strangely, and
strongly

strongly darted into the Thoughts of Christians, CHAP. XV.
whilst they are exercised in Prayer and other
holy Things, such foreign improper Things, as
are the too frequent Occasion of Wanderings and
Coldness, as if designed to intercept prevailing
Fervency, and suspend any Impression upon us
for Good : Which can be resolv'd into no Cause,
but the Efforts and Agency of the evil Spirit:
And Experience attests further, that Thoughts
which favour of Impurity, or Blasphemy, or other
Iniquity, are irresistible as to their first Entrance
and Beginning in the Mind, therefore not im-
putable to us as Sin, before they have gain'd
a Continuance there by our Consent and Appro-
bation.

AND we are as certain from Revelation, that
the *Devil* is indefatigably vigilant * in laying
Snares for our Ruin, and strangely subtle in his
Devices † and Temptations, which we are charged
to be aware of ; and to *pray*, as well as watch
that we enter not into them, for this Reason,
because *the Spirit is willing, but the Flesh*
weak || ; we should in Prayer apply to and at-
tend upon constant Aid from above, that the
willing Spirit may be made stronger to restrain
the yielding Flesh. Though we delight in the
Law of God *after the inward Man*, ‡ which shews
the Law to be *spiritual* in that Sense, *ver.* 14.
and also that every Man has *that* Testimony
within himself of the original Uprightness of his
State and Nature, yet the *Law of the Members*;
which wars against the Law of the Mind, would
always bring it into Captivity to the Law of Sin,
if supervening Assistance did not turn the Scale.

* 1 *Pet.* v. 8. 2 *Tim.* iii. 7. † 2 *Cor.* ii. 11.
|| *Mat.* xxvi. 41. ‡ *Rom.* viii. 22, 23, &c.

CHAP. XV. IT would be an unequal Combat for the confess'd Weakness and Degeneracy of human Nature, to engage both against the *Devil* and the *Flesh*; if there was not Aid ready at hand superior to both of them. Therefore the Apostle, in the *Person* of an unconverted *Jew*, and *Gentile*, both of whom he had concluded under Sin, and in the most inoffensive *Metaschematism* of *himself*, had convicted each of them, in their Turns, of Wretchedness, cries out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* In the following Verse, he thanks God thro' *Jesus Christ* (which not being a direct Answer, it may be question'd, as Mr. *Locke* has observed, whether ὁ χάρις τῷ Θεῷ, which is the *Remedy*, is not the true Reading, being a more direct Answer) and in the following Chap. † proposes the *only* Remedy for being freed from the Law of Sin and Death, and that is, *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*.

FOR the Spirit of Christ attending his Gospel (and he that has not his Spirit is no real Christian) as it is the Spirit of *Adoption*, is a new Principle to the carnal Mind, both for freeing it in its Anxiety from the Condemnation of Sin, arising from the transgress'd Law of *Moses*, and the unperform'd Law of the Mind, *i. e.* the Law of Nature; and from the ill Consequences of Death, which has no harm in it after its Sting is taken away, *viz.* the Guilt and condemning Power of Sin: And likewise a new Principle leading to eternal life, by directing, soliciting, and helping our Infirmities of the *Flesh* to a present Newness of Life, not to live after the *Flesh* but after the Spirit, or the Law of the Spirit, *i. e.* the Gospel.

† *Rom. viii. 2, 9, &c.*

FOR-

FORASMUCH as they who govern themselves by the old Principle or Rule of Action, the Law of the Members or Flesh, controuling the Mind and bringing it into Captivity to the Law of Sin, cannot, of themselves, free themselves from Sin; and as long as the Mind submits itself to that Law, it is *carnally* minded, is in a State of *Enmity against God, cannot please him*; because, being habitually subject to a contrary Master, and a contrary Law, *it is not* (at the same time) *subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*; the Law of Contraries makes it impossible that it should. But when the Mind submits to the Law of the Spirit of Life (as all who put on Christ, or take the Profession of *Christian* upon them, are obliged to do) then it is *spiritually* minded, minding the Things of the Spirit, and being so guided and governed is pleasing to God; and the blessed Effect of that, is *Life and Peace, Remission of Sins, and eternal Life*: For the Spirit, that raised Christ from the Dead, dwells and resides in them likewise, to raise them from the Dead to eternal Life; as in *ver. 11*. Then being led by the *Spirit of God* as we were devoted in Baptism, and having that Testimony of our Conscience that we are govern'd by his Word, and act as becomes our Baptism and Calling in Christ, *it beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God*, *ver. 16*.

THE Apostle's Inference is very just, *Therefore Brethren, we, as many as profess ourselves Christians, are Debtors not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh, but to the Spirit, to mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, in order to enjoy the Redemption of the Body from the Grave, and the Glory that shall be reveal'd in the eternal Life ensuing, which the Faithful groan after in their mortal persecuted*

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persecuted Bodies ; as all Mankind, unwilling to die and part with their Bodies for good and all, groan for a Resurrection in the constitutional Desires of their Nature. So far is it from the true State and Constitution of Things, that the Body is the *Prison* of the Soul, that it is its dear and ever desirable Partner, an essential Part of the Nature and Being of Man, to revive again and live for ever.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are (adopted) Sons of God : And therefore Heirs hereafter with Christ, of that Redemption, and Glory, which he is now in Possession of. In the Hope of which incomparable Glory we are saved in the Sufferings of this present Life, counting them, tho' so much the Lot of Christians at that time, as nothing in the Comparison. Besides that Hope, Christians, who are led by the Spirit, and by being adopted to that future State, have this further Advantage, that the same Spirit is ready, invisibly, as the Things hoped for are invisible, to help our Infirmities ; when in our Distresses we pray to God, and yet know not, in particular, what to pray for as we ought, whether for Increase of Patience under, or Deliverance from them ; but the Spirit itself (which worketh those Desires of Glory and eternal Life in the Adopted) intercedeth for us with Groanings that can't be utter'd, i. e. silent, fervent, moving, and effectual, such as becomes adopted Sons, and according to the Will of God towards them ; what is best for them at such pressing Junctures, which the Spirit knoweth, tho' they don't ; and therefore supplies their mental Prayers with that silent Sorrow and Sighing which is the most moving: Silence proceeding from inward Grief at Sin is most loud, and moving

moving to the Ears of Heaven ! By Parity of Reason it may be concluded, that when the Matter of our other Prayers and Addresses are according to the *known Will of God*, the Holy Spirit excites such filial Freedom and Chearfulness, fervent Desires, devout Affections, and Postures of Mind, as are suitable to the respective Matter and Subject of them : For that, in respect both of *Matter* and *Manner*, is *praying in the Holy Ghost*, *Jud. 20.*

As God formerly in peculiarity of Favour dwelt among the *Jews* by *Tabernacle*, and by *Temple*, with a *Partition Wall* exclusive of the *Gentiles* ; so, upon the Ruins of the Temple, when the Duration, or *for ever* of that Dispensation was at an end, the *Habitation of God thro' the Spirit* * was erected indiscriminately in the Hearts of all who embraced the Faith of Christ ; and the powerful miraculous Operations of the Spirit, so commonly display'd among the *Gentiles*, demonstrated to the *then Jews*, that God dwelt as visibly among the *Gentiles* as ever they could pretend he had done among them ; and consequently that their *Peculium* and Adoption to Favour was at an end.

AND as the Use of a *Seal* was to render a thing *peculiar* and appropriate, so by the undeniable Gifts of the Holy Ghost, the *Gentiles*, to the ample Conviction of the other, were sealed and appropriated a *chosen Generation*, a *royal Priesthood*, a *peculiar People*, an *holy Nation*, † as well as they had been, being *sanctified* in Baptism by Water, and the *Renewal of the Holy Ghost* to all moral Holiness, as those had been by Circumcision to legal ceremonial Holiness. The

* Eph. ii. 22.

† 1 Pet. ii. 9.

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Foundation, or Covenant, of God standeth sure, having this *Seal*, The Lord knoweth who are his, &c. And as their Kings, Priests, and Prophets, had their particular Anointing and Designation from Heaven; so Christians having receiv'd a general Anointing, or the thing couch'd under that Symbol, *i. e.* Sanctification and Consecration from the Holy Ghost, in allusion to the other, are stiled *Kings* and *Priests*, but no where *Prophets*; for that laborious Office, as to the *Teaching*, *Exhorting*, and *Reproving* Part, was appropriated to a particular Order of Men. Tho' Christ presenting those, who *suffer* for him, to the Father as *Kings* and *Priests to reign with him*, seems to mean a particular Glorification of Honour for the Disgrace and Contempt they met with on Earth for the Sake of his Religion: Yet, even upon Earth, to *serve* God and Virtue, is to *Rule* and be a *King*, in the most valuable Dominion over a Man's self; and moreover to *offer* to God *Sacrifices enough*, being the highest rational Honour in the greatest moral Liberty. Hence that of the *Stoicks*, *The wise Man only has true Liberty, he solely Reigns, he only enjoys Empire*. With respect to the other, there is a Passage in *Hierocl. Carm. Pyth. p. 24.* to this effect, "*The wise Man* "*is only called the PRIEST of God; he is* "*only acceptable to him; he only understands how* "*to pray to him, and only knows how to honour* "*him, without confounding the Dignity due to him.* "*For in the first Place, he offers himself a Sacri-* "*fice, making his Mind the Image, and preparing* "*himself to be his Temple.*"

IT may be added, that as Man was made the Priest of *Nature*, to *offer* up to the Creator the Praises of all inanimate and irrational Creatures, so Christ has obliged every Christian to be
a Priest

a Priest of *Grace*, for *offering up* to God continually his private Praise, Thanks, and Joy in the Lord, for his Redemption by his Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*. No Layman then should malign the distinction of *publick* Priest, ordained to offer up the *publick* Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving for that and all God's Mercies.

THOSE present *extraordinary Gifts* || of Christ's Spirit, after his bodily Departure, were a plain *Earnest*, and *first Fruits* to the *then* Christians, that Christ had actually taken Possession of that heavenly Inheritance he had promised his Followers ; and likewise of his indisputable Power of giving Life, and quickening whom he would, by a Resurrection from the Dead, to Life eternal.

AND after the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit ceased, when their End ceased, *i. e.* when the external Evidence from the Testimony of Miracles, was finally seal'd and shut up : Such as the * Word of *extraordinary* Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Gifts of Healing, working Miracles, Prophecy, discerning of Spirits, divers kinds of Tongues, and the Interpretation thereof ; the Use and Design of them being, as it is affirmed, for *Signs* † not to them that believe, but *to them that believe not* ; the miraculous Operations of the Spirit are principally called his *Gifts*, and every Receiver, was to minister according to the Analogy or *Proportion* of that particular Gift, *Faith*, or Talent in the Recipient in the first Days of Christianity ; whilst his ordinary permanent Operations are called *Fruits*, growing in that Soil of

|| These are always distinguish'd by the Name *χαρίσματα*, or *τὰ πνευματικά*, very different from and not so lastingly valuable as the ordinary *Fruits* of the Spirit, *i. e.* moral Virtues.

* 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c.

† xiv. 22.

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moral Virtues and Dispositions which are the Co-operation on Man's part. There remain'd, and remains, his ordinary Gifts and Aids, for the perpetual Edification of the Church in the *Spirit of Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, of a sound Mind, of practical Faith, and Fear of the Lord, of Adoption, and Love*, in exclusion to the Spirit of *servile Fear and Bondage; Joy in the Holy Ghost; his Fellowship or Communion, his Comforts in Trouble; his bringing things to Remembrance; our Sanctification, and Regeneration by Water and Renewal of the Holy Ghost, and every good and perfect Gift descending from above.*

ALL these rest upon the Members of the Church as a *Right and Privilege*, conferrable and improveable at the Request of their own Prayers in Christ's Name for the *Spirit*; and their Improvement and Growth in these *Graces* depends upon the fructifying Use of their own Endeavours. And this seems to be the Reason, why we are never saluted with Grace and Peace in any of the *Epistles*, in the Name of the *Holy Spirit*, except perhaps that from the seven Spirits, *Rev. i. 4.* as we are in that of the *Father*, and the *Son*; because the Spirit confers those Gifts and Graces as an actual Right, in virtue of a *Promise* perform'd, given, and derived from the Father, and the Son; but we are divinely blessed in the *Communion of the Holy Ghost* at the End of *2 Cor.* And that Communication or Participation with the Spirit we are obliged to cultivate, and respect with such a Deference and Decency of Behaviour becoming the Gospel, as not to grieve † or vex, but obey and be led by him,

† *Eph. iv. 30.*

who is the best *Comforter* and *Advocate* we have upon Earth. C H A P.
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FOR though we have the written Word (originally inspired by the Spirit) which is able to make wise unto Salvation ; and the Facts and Arguments of the endearing Mercy, Goodness, and Love of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, are enough, as one would think, to warm our natural cold Hearts, and quicken our dead Powers, and be unto us externally a supernatural Assistance that comes from God, for leading our Feet into the Way of Peace. Though Faith in the true Mediator, that new *Medium*, which the Reason of Man could never, of itself, have discover'd for assuring him of *Acceptance* with God, as being supplied from Heaven, and convey'd in Scriptures wrote by Inspiration, may be called the *standing Inspiration* of the Christian's Reason for that Assurance, Confidence, Hope, and Trust. And though by natural Liberty of our Will we are *free* to *Good* as well as *Evil* : Yet we are so carried away with the Stream, and affected with the Grievs and Joys of *present* Things ; and willingly follow the Fashions and false Maxims of the World ; and the Bias of our own ill Habits, contracted from too much Indulgence to bodily Affections, and the hurry of worldly Affairs, *the bewitching of Naughtiness does obscure things that are honest, and the wandring of Concupiscence undermine the Simple of Mind.* Wisd. iv. 12. that we generally remain irresolute and unconstant, forgetful and indolent to spiritual Things, and heavenly Attainments.

NOR should we ordinarily attain them, if the Holy Spirit did not aid our Backwardness, quicken our Listness, and co-operate with our Endeavours after them. How many things do

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we know in Holy Scripture that accompany Salvation, and yet don't know them, because we don't duly consider, and transcribe them into Action as we ought, nor draw the proper, *i. e.* practical Consequences from them? After we have look'd into the perfect Law of Liberty, how often are we, forgetful Creatures, like the Man beholding his natural Face in a Glass, who, after he is gone from it, straitway forgets what manner of Man he was?

THEREFORE is the Holy Spirit so ready and friendly to the Mind pressed down by the Body to bring things to Remembrance, * to make its heedlessness more attentive, and its disposition to muse upon many things more serious and considerate of the one thing needful; holding the glass of Reflection up in the Memory, for the Understanding to look into again and again, till it has perused the whole Man; and so making the Rule of Duty inwardly present to the Mind, may literally be said to put *those Laws of the new Covenant inwardly in our Minds, and write them on our Hearts*, 'Heb: viii. 10.

NOT that the Spirit inspires new Truths, or Motives; but sets the Light of the *Truth* of Scripture for *Doctrine*, for *Reproof*, for *Correction*, for *Instruction in Righteousness* more clearly and convincingly before the *Understanding*; and the Motives to Duty more cogently and engagingly before the *Will*, to practical Purposes, as an *Advocate* of Virtue and Salvation; and so helps and assists the Client, the Servant of God and Christ, to make good his Cause of God and Christ,

* *Plenus sum rimarum*, is a classical and natural Description of the Mind of Man; and that of a Fool is, *his inward Parts are like a broken Vessel*, Ecclus. xxi. 14.

and his own Happiness, against the Sophistry and Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. CHAP.
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AND as he is indeed our Fellow-Labourer in that Design of the Gospel, and no more than an Assistant in that Work of Regeneration, Sanctification, and Righteousness, that shews that he does not do the *whole* Work ; but that our Endeavours are equally necessary to assist him to effect all that he undertakes for us. Therefore are we commanded to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, from that very consideration that Assistance from him is present, because it is he that worketh in us both to will and do of his good Pleasure. He argues and debates with us from our own Concessions, from the *Faith* we have embraced ; what manner of Persons it obliges us to be ; and so by means of our *Faith* in Christ (whom God appointed Mediator of his Will and Pleasure) *worketh in us to will and do* according to the Gospel, which is *the Law of the Spirit of Life* : Thus he *purifies* the Heart through Faith, and through Obedience to the *Truth*. He recalls Vows and Resolutions for better living, the *Will's own* Acts and Deeds ; and pleads them afresh before that Regent (*advocating with* us below, whilst Christ advocates for us above) to fix its natural Instability and Inconstancy.

THERE is the Inspiration of Truth, and the Inspiration of Lies ; one from the Father of Truth, the other from the Father of Lies : the first through the Medium of right Reason, the right Mediator ; the latter thro' the Medium of Inconsideration, Sensuality, and worldly Love. Thus the Understanding of Christians in general may, by asking it of God, be said to be *enlight-*

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en'd, and to have Eyes open to perceive the Sense of Scripture, the wonderous things of God's law, and the practical use of the *Fear* of the Lord, the saving benefit of *Faith*, and of the great *Mystery* of Godliness, *God manifest in the Flesh*. And thus the *Governors* of our *Church* (as it is happily at this Day) are assisted with the *Spirit* of *Counsel* for giving Advice ; of *Knowledge* for distinguishing the Ends from the Means of Religion ; of *Wisdom* for applying the Means to the End (the principal Sense of Wisdom in Scripture ;) and of a *sound Mind* for the Regulation of their whole Conduct, in their high Sphere of bringing Minds to Christ, the great Bishop of Souls.

Thus the unconstant desultory Will is more fix'd and steady to that which is good ; by the frequent Importunities, urgent Advices, and repeated Suggestions of this divine Friend, watching the *mollia tempora fandi*, and then putting into the Heart good Desires. Thus good Desires and Affections are kindled in Prayer ; and Comfort springs up in Trouble ; and Chearfulness lightens the burthen of Duty ; by his suggesting and insinuating proper Thoughts and Ideas into the Mind, at those times. And so the whole Man, by degrees, becomes a favourite Subject of the Kingdom of God ; which consists of *Righteousness*, *Peace*, and *Joy in the Holy Ghost* ; shedding abroad the love of God upon the Heart, to its great Joy ; and in the present Satisfaction of being adopted to his Favour, making the *Spirit* of future *Glory* rest upon it in all Joy and Peace in believing, that it may abound in Hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. *

* 1 Pet. iv. 14. Rom. xv. 33.

AND is not this an happy Benefit of Christianity, to have our natural Powers aided and assisted imperceptibly, and not the least compelling alteration offered to them? Thoughts and Ideas being kindly whisper'd and familiarly impress'd, as if they were our own. Thoughts and Ideas, our natural Powers must be stronger and better furnish'd by having that super-addition, than they are without it. Therefore we are said to be *strengthen'd with Might through the Spirit in the inward Man to do his Will*, Eph. iii. 15. and to be able to *do all things of Duty through Christ that strengthens us*, Phil. iv. 13. And when the Spirit, which lusteth against the Flesh, gets the dominion over it, the obsequious Members change their Master, and their Work, from Uncleanneſs and Iniquity, to Righteousneſs and Holineſs.

BUT what endears it the more to us is, we have that additional supervening Aid as much in our Power, and as constantly at our Service, as we have our own natural Powers at our own Service, for our good; and that is by our Prayers for it, and by using that friendly which uses us so. For tho' it is the common Christian Benefit and Effect of God's Government over us in Christ, yet are we as much obliged to depend upon it in Prayer, and be thankful for it, as in the natural course of his Providence we are bound to pray for our daily Bread, and be thankful for that. And as there may be extraordinary Providences out of the common course in one Case, so there may, sometimes, be in the other an over-ruling Determination; never to be prayed for, or expected by any Man.

WHATEVER therefore we can do by our own natural Faculties, we can much better do, and

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with more ease, by the help of another Power added to them ; and what we could not naturally master and subdue, we may, this way, be enabled to accomplish ; and consequently no Difficulty from without, nor Weakness, nor Disinclination from within, ought to be alledg'd against Duty ; seeing we are confederate with a Power that is superior to all Opposition, and can, when it pleases, shew its Strength in our Weakness. For if God be for us, who can be against us ? And when he is duly address'd unto, for the continuance of his Favour, we can have no doubt that *he who has begun a good Work in us, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.* * We are bid to covet earnestly the best Gifts ; the Holy Spirit in ordinary, is now that best Gift ; and the way of coveting it earnestly, and improving that *Christian Talent* sedulously, is to be earnest in Prayer in the Name of *Christ* for it.

For he strives with us and for us ; and never abandons us as long as there is any hope of our Recovery ; nor is any left to a reprobate Mind, past feeling, till by repeated Refusals of his kindly Assistance, and obstinate Perseverance in Wickedness, they let him know there is no hopes of them ; and as soon as they are lost to all Persuasion, they are lost also to Heaven, without a Miracle : which will not be bestow'd upon them ; for as they came into the World a free Creature, so they shall go out of it again to the Place of their own chusing. God respects every thing as he has made it, guides and governs it according to its Nature. Nor shall any Grace of his be a *Force* upon any Man ; nor will he move in us contrary to, but in concert

* *Phil.* i. 6.

with the Movements of our own Powers, nor operate inwardly but in Conjunction with our own inward Operations: Notwithstanding he so frequently lays the Thoughts, Opportunities, and Impulses to Good before us, by his Providential ordering our outward Circumstances of Life.

FOR as a *Graff* put into a natural Stock accommodates itself to the natural Powers of the Stock, dwells in, and incorporates with it, not to destroy the Stock, or any of its Powers; but gradually mends and improves them to the Production of better Fruit; and by due Culture, and in time, all is converted into the *Nature* of the *Graff*, according to the Intention of grafting: So the *Spirit of Christ* grafted (suppose by *Baptism*) into the carnal Mind, the natural Stock of every Man, and afterwards duly cultivated, by degrees, as it grows to Maturity, draws the natural Powers of the carnal Mind to *itself*; and so you see the Fruits of the Spirit, * *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Gentleness, Faith* [that believeth all things, the best of every Body] *Meekness, Temperance* (changing the Name of moral Virtues into Christian *Graces*, and Humanity into *Charity*) flourishing, where nothing otherwise would have grown but the contrary Fruits of the Flesh. And by this appointed Means and Christian Culture, of mortifying the Deeds of the Flesh by the Spirit, wild Fruit is changed into good, so good as to be pleasing to God. And as one is a Regeneration of natural Fruit in a physical Way, so the other is a *Regeneration* of moral Fruit, in a moral Way; the moral Pow-

* *Gal. v. 22, 23.*

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ers being still the same by Nature (free to Good, as they were to Evil) whilst they are freely led and directed to better Productions, by the Advantage of being incorporated with *Christ their Head*.

AND a great Change to moral Effects and good Fruits may be wrought by this invisible Origin of being *born of the Spirit*, as in Nature great Changes are made by the invisible blowing of the Wind where it listeth. However it is so necessary in the Institution of God, that there is no entering his Kingdom, without being born of that, and *Water*. As we are by natural Birth united to Christ in one Part of our Nature, Flesh and Blood, so by spiritual Birth the *Holy Spirit* seems necessary to unite our *Spirit*, the other Part of our Nature, to God and Christ by Adoption: He *who is thus join'd to the Lord, is one Spirit*, as before he was one Flesh. And he that is born of Water and the Spirit, if he is not quite taken out of the old Stock of the first *Adam*, yet the second *Adam Christ* is grafted in him, or he grafted into that new Stock, to produce all those Alterations for good, which the old one was deficient in.

THE Branches that depend upon the Vine for Life and Growth, and bearing Fruit and imbibing Juices in order to it, *can do nothing* as to either, *without* a vital Abiding in and Communion with it: And Christ is the *true Vine* in the same Sense of imbibing from him, as he is the *true Bread*, in the digesting Sense of his Doctrine; and his Flesh was as much Bread or Meat indeed, as his Blood was Wine and Drink indeed, for maintaining indeed that vital spiritual Communion, in imbibing and digesting his Doctrine

Doctrines (and holding Communication with the CHAP. Head, by duly commemorating *his Death*, the XV. *capital Doctrine* of his Religion, in the Lord's Supper, that After-Explanation in Fact of eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood) according to his own immediate verbal Explication, *The Words I speak unto you are Spirit and Life, * i. e.* when the Words *Vine, Flesh, Blood, Bread or Wine* are *Emblems* and *figurative Expressions* that cannot, nor were ever intended to signify *literally*, the *moral*, emblematical, not the literal, is the true Sense or *Spirit* of those Expressions : Just as *Spirit* is opposed to *Flesh*, and *Letter*, in the Types and Ceremonies of the *Jews* ; one killeth, the other giveth Life, and Meaning.

As God is the Giver of our Faculties, and Exciter and Encourager to Good, whatever of that Nature is the free and wise Product of them, is, at the same time, the Gift of God ; and the Praise and Glory is due to him : Mean time we shall not miss of our Reward for following his Counsel ; and consenting to be led by it to our own Happiness ; because that Good would not have been done, if God had not bestow'd the Faculty, the Opportunity, the Motive and Direction for it. Thus he is said to *give a new Heart, and a new Spirit*, yet he requires us to cast away our Transgressions in order to *make ourselves* a new Heart and a new Spirit, † There are many Expressions of the like Import, resolvable into the like Interpretation.

AND as he governs free Agents according to their Nature, and hinders not the bad Effects that result from the Determination of their own Choice, he is said in a figurative and foreign

* *Job. vi. 63.*

† *Ezek. xviii. 31.*

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Sense to *harden* the Heart ; whilst he has no Hand in it, any farther, than permitting Sin to produce its own Effects, and operate upon the Heart, according to the hardening Deceivableness of its Nature. He never gives any Man up to a fatal Blindness and Hardness of Heart, till he is irrecoverable by Persuasion and rational Motives ; *Deus non deserit nisi deserentem*. Or, in other Words, *Since you have forsaken me, I will forsake you also—You have not forsaken me, but your own selves, saith the Lord, 2 Esdr. i. 25.*

THE comfortable Truth therefore lies in the *Middle* between the two Extremes, which have both had their Run, and prevailed in their Turns ; the irresistible Grace of God, on the one hand ; and the no Occasion of the internal Aids of his Spirit, on the other. We ought certainly to covet earnestly the *best Gifts*, and strive to regain, as much as we are able, that *Degree* of Perfection of human Liberty, wherein Man was first created. Every *perfect*, as well as good Gift comes from God. He only enjoys Liberty in its absolute Perfection ; by being *immutably free* from all Defects, and from all Inclination to Evil, which is a Defect. That *Immutability* is peculiar and essential to the *supreme Good* ; nor is there any *good* in that Sense, but one, and that is *God* : He is only *infallible* in Understanding, and therefore *impeccable* in Will ; and neither one nor the other are communicable to any Creature. Therefore the Degrees of Good, or Perfection of Liberty *relative* to their several Stations, communicated to the rational Creatures he has made, is temper'd with a *natural Mutability*, or Possibility of *inclining* to Evil, and degenerating from what they are. Such are all the Angels. *He chargeth even his Angels with Folly.* The Angels
being

being placed in their Paradise or State of Probation, not as Man was by a primitive Pair and Succession, extraduce, but altogether at once in their own produced Persons, some kept not their *first* Estate ; and they that stand being *capable* of falling, are chargeable with Folly, by being capable of the Folly of thinking themselves independent of God, or infallible like him. And therefore Fallibility and Frailty from Angel down to Man is continually propt up by various gradations of Dependency, Recourses, and Religion unto God.

THO' Man, God's youngest Son, was endow'd with Liberty and Reason a little lower than the Angels, as much lower as discursive Reason is to intuitive Dispatch, and choice of Will with a Tempter, is to one without one, by being station'd, for a time, in the midst of sensual Appetites and Objects, whence more and more Occasion and Inclination to Evil ; still the Liberty, suited to his Station, was perfect in its *kind*, having his *primitive* Inclinations cast and moulded upright and entire towards Good in dependence upon his Maker, the Author of all his Happiness ; that dependent, imitative Image of himself, wherein God had fashion'd his natural Liberty and moral Agency with a prevailing *Bias* and *Inclination* within towards *Good*, liable to be altered by nothing but yielding to Sin thro' outward Temptation ; but after yielding to it, the Bias turn'd to the *other* Side, and made the great Alteration and Disfigurement in the Image of God ; what was unknown before, a *Temptation* from *within* ever after sprang up, to solicit the natural Liberty and moral Agency ; that Temptation from within join'd to Temptation from without stood therefore in the

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MAN had continued in his first Aptitude and Biass, it may be, for many Generations, had not the *Tempter* (the *first Lyar* and *Hypocrite* in the World, and the Father of all Lies and Hypocrisy since) so soon deceiv'd and prevail'd with the false Pretence of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, before Lying or Hypocrisy, or the moral Evil of Disobedience were known in the sublunary World: And by deceiving, *murder'd* the Perfection of his pristine Liberty, and inverted the prevailing Biass of his Constitution from Good to Evil. The corruptible Body with its corrupt Affections has press'd upon, and too often insulted, ever since, our Longing and Desire after conscious primitive Liberty, and Rectitude; and a *native* Love of Truth, and a *natural* Abhorrence of Falshood and Hypocrisy as our greatest Enemy, still lives in us, as if every Man had been present with, and Partaker of that Transaction.

So far is Freedom to moral Evil from being the true Liberty of Man, that it is actually his Weakness, Degeneracy, and too frequently his Servitude and Captivity. He has deviated very much ever since from *real* Good; which is the true Object of true Liberty; and fluctuated greatly in Error both about Good, and about Liberty; and, because of those Errors, there is a Necessity for Laws to curb and restrain the ill Effects of them: till the Religion of the Mediator *Christ Jesus* came to shew him his true Good, and recover him to his true Liberty, and strengthen and perfect him in it, as he grows up to that greater Perfection of it, at the Resurrection, to a new and better Body, called the
glorious

glorious *Liberty of the Sons of God*; by its glorious divine Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps; to which all are entitled, who embrace it sincerely; and all who reject, are excluded the Benefit of any of them.

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AND what are the Restraints of the Gospel upon the temerity of Man's Choice of Evil, but perfect Peace and Freedom to our rational Spirit, and the compleatest Liberty of Mind that can be desired in this Life? And what better verifies the ancient Observation of *Job*; * *Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Freedom, and to depart from Evil is true Liberty*? The Truth of the Gospel, that perfect Law of Liberty, is that only which makes Men free indeed.

If therefore the *Deists* were indeed true in their pretended Respect, or consistent to the Obedience of the Law of Nature, they so much assume to glory in, they would gladly come into the *Christian* Measures in earnest; which glory in nothing so much, as in improving Man's Liberty, and increasing his Inclination to perform that Law.

I PRESENT them with a Passage from Bishop Taylor. "The Case of moral Actions and spiritual is all one; for that Action is moral which is done in Obedience to a Law; and a spiritual Action is no more; save only it relates to another Law, to the Evangelical, or spiritual Law of Liberty: But in the Nature of the Thing, it is the same; and one may as well be chosen as the other, when they are equally taught and commanded, and propounded under the same proportionable Amability; and till they be so propounded, they

* Chap. xxviii. 28.

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“ are not equally Laws. Besides this, the denying Liberty in all moral Things of Manners, in all Things of Obedience to the Laws of God and Man, and the allowing it in all Things under no Law, is a Destruction of the very Nature and Purpose of Liberty. For the only End of Liberty is to make us capable of Laws, of Virtue and Reward, and to distinguish us from Beasts, by a distinct Manner of Approach to God, and a Way of Conformity to him proper to us ; and except in the Matter of Virtue and Vice, except in order to Reward and Punishment, Liberty and Choice were good for nothing : For to keep ourselves from Harm, from Poison, and Enemies, a natural Instinct, and lower Appetites, would serve our Needs, as well as the Needs of Birds and Beasts. And therefore to allow it where it is good for nothing, and to deny it, where only it can be useful and reasonable, and fit to be done, and is given by the wise Father of all his Creatures, must needs be amiss.” *

I SHUT up this Head with the Words of the Apostle, *Heb. xiii. 20, 23.* which include the three Offices of our Mediator, *King, Prophet, Priest*, and the inward Aids I have been treating of. *Now the God of Peace that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight.*

* Duct. Dub. Book IV. p. 752, 753.



C H A P. XVI.

Of EXTERNAL MOTIVES.

UNDER this Head might be comprehended Example; which has an immediate lively Influence upon such imitating Creatures as we are, kindling in us any laudable Action that is done before us, shaming and dissolving all Objection of Slothfulness, or Impracticableness. Nor can any System of Religion pretend to a perfect Example of moral Behaviour but the Christian.

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I MIGHT mention the Wisdom, Decency, Honour, and Reputation of Virtue; and the Folly, Baseness, Shame, and Odiousness of Sin, as having the Devil for its Author. And the *Author of Christianity as old*, &c. says, “Nothing operates more strongly, than the Desire Men have of being in Esteem, Credit, and Reputation with their Fellow-Creatures; nor is it to be obtain’d without acting upon the Principles of natural Justice, Equity, Benevolence*.” If this is the strong Principle of Religion with our Author, Christianity inculcates those Virtues far beyond his natural Religion.

I PASS by the Love and Goodness of God in sending his Son into the World; and the reciprocal Love resulting from the common Gra-

* P. 16.

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I MIGHT instance the Motive of public Spirit from the Precepts, of *not looking every one on his own Things, but on the Things also of others*; and the Duty of *laying down our Lives for the Brethren*.

I MIGHT hint at, what is very little mention'd, the Beauty and Loveliness of Virtute. Seeing the Scripture becomes all things to all Men, that it may save some; accommodates itself to all Tempers and Dispositions; the Slothful and Diligent, Sanguine and Cold, Generous and Disingenuous, Polite and Uneducated; all have Motives and respective Arguments adapted to them, to excite them severally to good living.

BUT I select the EXTERNAL MOTIVES exciting *Hope* and *Fear*, as what chiefly moves and affects human Nature, as we are made *accountable* Creatures to the Author of our Being. The Christian Hope is establish'd upon the sure Basis of *glorious Rewards* in a future Life; which *Faith* in God's *Promise* in the Mediator, in whom all the Promises *are yea, and in him Amen*, from the Fall of Man, is realized into a *Substance* like their own Home, a Pledge of the best Reality and State of Man, a *certain* Expectation of, and Dependance upon *the Things hoped for*, and into an *Evidence of Things not seen*, as operative and convincing, as if they had been seen; overcoming the present World, and the worst Thing in it, Death in its worst Appearance; despising also Crowns, the finest Thing in it; and living above all its delusive Enjoyments, as Strangers, Sojourners, Pilgrims, steadily bending their Course to their proper, and that a better Country,

try, which had their Hearts, and influenced their Actions; as may be seen in the Catalogue of those glorious Martyrs and Confessors of that *Recompence of Reward*, Heb. xi. And if there were such stedfast lively Efforts of this Hope before the Advent of Christ, what abundance more must there have been, since *his bringing Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel*? It being matter of perpetual Thanksgiving unto God ever since, for having, *according to his abundant Mercy, begot us to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead* *.

HAPPINESS being the uninterrupted Inclination of our Nature, and Misery its contrary Averſion; the wiſe Author of our Being has wrought the Paſſions of Hope and Fear in us as Springs of Action, and a Spur to Induſtry. The Body might be alive, but immoveable like a Tree; the Underſtanding would grow languid, and the Will unactive, if the other did not bring in the Objects or Things that concern them to be occupied about. Reason could have no concern. in Futurity was there neither Hope, nor Fear: And what is hope and fear of Rewards and Punishments but a State of *Discipline* of native Self-love and Preservation, and of its Tendency to Happineſs, and Avoidance of Miſery? They are the Wings and Sails of the Soul in her ſeveral Motions. All the Paſſions are therefore given as domeſtick Inſtruments in every body's Hand for perfecting and accompliſhing, or degrading and injuring his Nature, juſt as they are applied, or miſapplied; to the carrying on the Good and Intereſt of the inferior Animal, or the ſuperior Rational Part of his Conſtitution;

* 1 Pet. i. 3.

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or both jointly together, in Subordination one to the other. Hope and Fear regarding Futurity, with all the other Passions, spring out of *Love*, as will appear a few Pages afterwards; Happiness or Misery, here and hereafter, depend upon the regular Conduct, or irregular Misapplication of our Love. If its *supreme* Respect is placed upon God and the Happiness propounded and promised with him in the Life to come, that supreme Good is infinitely abundant to fill up every Man's Happiness, being commensurate to all his Desires; and, at one and the same Time, to satisfy the Happiness of all Men, all together, without any Envy or the least Dissatisfaction at their Share; then all the other Passions placidly fall under due Government. But if the same Respect is *misplaced*, and for so long as it is so, upon worldly Things, which put all together are unable to make any one Man happy, and being limited in their Enjoyment, impossible to be possessed by all together without the Lusts of Covetousness, Ambition, &c. whence Wars and Fighting, and all Disorders in Society; Rebellion of Passions against Reason and Religion; and, without Amendment, everlasting Misery. The Office of Reason then is not to suspend their Influence, but direct and regulate them to right Objects; and estimate those Objects by the Measures of Comparison, how much our innate Desire of Happiness and Aversion to Misery will be affected, and how lastingly involved therein.

AND because he knows our Degeneracy, that as long as we continue in this World we are more affected with *natural* Good and Evil, or Pleasure and Pain in present Sensation, and Belief of that which is future, than we are with moral Good and Evil, *i. e.* *right* or *wrong*, fit
or

or *unfit*; therefore has he graciously made our Duty as to the latter, to be our Interest as to Pleasure and Pain, in the truest and most lasting Sense, wisely and constitutionly connecting them together: And in order to move and excite us to the former, commonly approaches and interests himself in us, by Motives drawn from the latter; a very good Argument that the Author of Revelation was also the Author of our Nature. But to derogate from these unquestionable right Motives of Revelation, so surely founded in our Nature, is to impeach God, as if he did not know the Principles whereof he hath made us; or was not privy to the Degeneracy, approaching near to a moral Impotency, into which we are fallen. Tho' Motives, or Aids, don't alter the nature of Virtue, yet they so stimulate and assist the weak Nature of Man, and the ineffectual looking-on Power of Reason, as to render that practicable and prompt in Performance, which would otherwise hardly be feasible.

To be wholly influenced by *present* Pleasure or Pain, is to act not like a moral, but a *natural* Agent, or Brute; but if we duly used our Reason to weigh and adjust the fleeting, insincere, and soon after repented Pleasure that tempts to Sin, with its everlasting Pain hereafter; or the short painful Endurance providentially attending upon Virtue and a good Conscience in this Life, with the ever-over-flowing Rivers of Pleasure in that which is to come; which is most reasonable, and most for the Interest of our Being to be prefer'd, we should never mistake, nor fail of pleasing God; tho' in our uneducated Understandings we happen'd not to make out *à priori* the Obligations to Virtue from the eternal Reasons

of Right or Wrong; or not perceive enough the charming Beauty of its Practice from the Relations and Fitness of Things, or Persons. Because God has been so exactly careful in consulting the Salvation of all, in the Revelation of his Will, as to affix that, which *all* understand, (the Ignorant as well as the more knowing) *eternal* Happiness and Misery, to the Things that are pleasing, and displeasing to him. And he has not only encourag'd, but *commanded* our Hope and Trust in the one, and Fear in the other; as the final Effect and Adjudication of his Favour and Friendship, his Anger and Displeasure. And it is in this way he commands us to shew our Wisdom; which begins in his Fear, and is perfected in his Love.

EARTHL Y Passions in fact often over-bear Reason with Respect to wise Conduct for this World, much more to the Prejudice of the Wisdom that is from above; *Hierocles* represents the Mind carried by its Passions inclining to Sin, like so many *Weights* of *Lead* hanging upon it, ὡς πέρ τισι μολυβδίσιν ὑποφέρεται πρὸς κακίαν. A *Weight* which the Apostle advises to *lay aside*. And therefore there ought to be the greater Weight of more precious Things to poise, and recover it out of that sinking Condition, *viz.* the *exceeding* WEIGHT of *Glory*. The *Duration* and *Greatness* of REWARDS and PUNISHMENTS hereafter are revealed accordingly from Heaven to be an *Over-balance* for the *irregular* Passions of this Life; that no Hope, nor Fear, Joy, nor Suffering, Love, nor Hatred, may stand even in the Scales with what is to come; but be weighed down always exceedingly, with the *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*; and this *Counter-balance* of what is to come

come when this short Life is ended, from antagonist Objects certain to our Belief, is that which is ordained of Heaven, beyond all the Rules of human Philosophy, for securing the Tranquillity of Life. And these being adjusted to our present Nature as a present necessary Discipline, are not only true genuine Motives, but so absolutely necessary, that there would be very little Consideration of our Ways; less Virtue; and no Endurance of Difficulties for its sake, without those Sanctions to the Laws of it.

THAT *some* Virtuous shou'd fall short and be disappointed of the external Favour and Blessing of God in this World, is intended to preserve our Faith in *another*, in due Health and Vigour, by keeping up its Pulse in a breathing Exercise after a better State of Things: For, if every righteous Person was to be infallibly prosperous, and exempt from the common Hardships and Oppressions of Life, Virtue would become a worldly mercenary Thing. Where would Patience, or Trial of Perseverance, or Victory over the World appear, or the particular Crown for suffering wrongfully be look'd for? If no righteous Person was to be prosper'd, but wholly and universally neglected, where would be the Appearance of *Providence* left for succouring such in Distress? But if some Care, and very often signally too, is taken of them here, that is ample Consolation, there will be more taken of them in an after-State. Therefore are they required to cast the sure and stedfast *Anchor of their Hope, within the Vail* *, to enable them to ride out the Storms, and stem the Tide of worldly Affections and Desires impetuously rolling

* Heb. vi. 19.

this way and that way; and to make *that* their Stedfastness, *that* their Stand to Perseverance, *holding the Possession of it immoveable* *, because, the Things themselves are so, having God, not Man, for their Builder and Maker; whereas Hope in the uncertain future Things of this World is but a Name, and the Possession of them little better. St. Paul exercised himself in this very Hope to keep a Conscience void of Offence †; and the Ground of living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World is laid in the same ‡.

BESIDES, if God in his great Condescension to our future Happiness, and to our present Imperfection and Ignorance, wherein it really consists, has made his Laws and Commandments so many Directions and Qualifications for it, in the future Fruition of the Society of himself, and of good Spirits: And if that is the real Design of present Obedience to the sociable Laws of Virtue; why should we forget the Design, whilst we are practising the Qualification? If the Commandments are *Directions* to our Happiness, it must necessarily follow, *That in keeping of them there is great Reward.*

WISE Men shew their Wisdom generally by beginning at the End of the Action. The *escaping the Pollutions that are in the World*, and being made Partakers of the Divine Nature; the *cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*, and the *purifying ourselves as God is pure*, are committed to the Efficacy of this hope ||, in Promises, exceeding great and exceeding precious; for which cause we are said to be *saved*

* Heb. x. 23.

† Acts xxiv. 15.

‡ Tit. ii. 13.

|| 2 Pet. i. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 John iii. 3.

by it *. Why then should any be induced to suspend their Hope in another Life, whilst they are doing the Will of God in this? It is to all intents and purposes invidiously taking away that Spring of motion, which the Constitution of our Nature and the Wisdom of God have put into us towards virtuous Living, and then bantering and bidding us move in the ways of Virtue, heartless, and unconcern'd; which is the same thing as to stand still. That Man was at first made prone to *Good*, appears from the first Law or Covenant, whereof *Punishment* is only express'd as the Sanction. But since the great Change in his natural Tendency to *Evil*, REWARDS become necessary to be express'd as a Sanction of the *second* Covenant, to animate and recover him to his Good; and likewise PUNISHMENT, to awaken his Consideration, that he might not imagine that the *whole* of his Evil consisted in missing that Reward.

WHEREAS it is the important Concern we have in the final Issue, and everlasting Result, that interests us so much in the Ways of Virtue; and the Hope of the Prize set before us, that quickens us in the Race, and gives Caution to our Feet. The Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. acknowledges † “the Spring of all the Actions of the Creatures is their own Good: *We love God*, says he, from 1 *John* iv. 19. *because he first loved us*; and consequently our Love to him will be in proportion to our Sense of his Goodness to us.” Yet, according to his usual Fairness, shamefully mangles the Argument of the Apostle, and *suppresses* the Sense of the divine Goodness, the very Meaning of the Words,

* *Rom.* viii. 24.

† *Pag.* 13.

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which he would have every body else insensible of, as well as himself: If you ask the Instance of God's first loving us, the Apostle had declared it just before, *ver. 9, 10. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* That Goodness of God in shewing us our own Good, the only way to his Favour, and our own Happiness, is indeed intended of him, to be the true Spring of our Duty and Obedience to him.

BUT *this* Source of Virtue in loving God, and keeping his Commandments, is utterly rejected and despised by all those of our Author's Sentiments. They maintain the Sufficiency of Reason to find out every Virtue, and all the Ways to God's Favour, independent of any external Revelation from him; and likewise the Sufficiency of Virtue for its own Reward; "*that rational Actions carry with them their own Rewards, and irrational their Punishment.*" That the attractive Beauty and intrinsic Excellence of Virtue is sufficient Inducement to practice it; without any Eye to Self-Advantage, or the external Motives from Revelation. But how contrary to these are the Sentiments of Mr. *Lock*, who was a Bigot to nothing but Reason? "*How,*" says he, hath this one Truth [the Resurrection and Ascension of our Saviour] chang'd the Nature of things in the World? and given the Advantage to Piety over all that could tempt or deter Men from it. The Philosophers indeed shew'd the Beauty of Virtue: They set her off so as drew Mens Eyes and Approbation to her: But leaving her undow'd,

“ dowed, very few were willing to espouse her.
 “ The generality could not refuse her their Esteem
 “ and Commendation; but still turn’d their
 “ Backs on her and forsook her, as a Match not
 “ for their turn. But now there being put into
 “ the Scales, on her side, *an exceeding and im-*
 “ *mortal Weight of Glory*; Interest is come about
 “ to her, and Virtue now is visibly the most en-
 “ riching Purchase, and by much the best Bar-
 “ gain. That she is the Perfection and Excel-
 “ lency of our Nature; That she is herself a
 “ Reward, and will recommend our Names to
 “ future Ages, is not all that can now be said of
 “ her. ’Tis not strange that the learned Hea-
 “ thens satisfied not many with such airy Com-
 “ mendations. It has another Relish and Efficacy,
 “ to persuade Men that if they live well
 “ here, they shall be happy hereafter. Open
 “ their Eyes upon the endless unspeakable Joys
 “ of another Life; and their Hearts will find
 “ something solid and powerful to move them.
 “ —Upon this Foundation, and upon this only,
 “ Morality stands firm. — This makes it more
 “ than a Name*.” “ Tho’ human Law-givers,
 “ say the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. are
 “ forc’d to have recourse to Punishments, which
 “ are not connected with the things they forbid;
 “ yet a Being of infinite Power is not thus strait-
 “ en’d, but may make one the necessary Conse-
 “ quence of the other: And indeed how can it
 “ be otherwise, since Good and Evil have their
 “ Foundation in the essential Difference of
 “ Things, and their Nature is fix’d and immu-
 “ table: And consequently our Happiness de-
 “ pends on the intrinsic Nature of the one, and
 “ our Misery on the intrinsic Nature of the

* Reasonabl. of Christ. p. 287, &c.

“ other.”

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“other*.” This shews his true Sentiments, notwithstanding his occasional mention of future Rewards and Punishments, that hereafter no positive Rewards or Punishments are allotted to Mens Actions, but that the natural Consequence of those Actions in the inward Sense Men have of them, is the sole and only Reward and Punishment; which will be considered afterwards.

THESE must be acknowledged highly refined Principles of Virtue; sublime soaring Notions, calculated rather for the Admiration, than the real Practice and Service of it; to attract and engage the Minds of Philosophers *only*, and overlook and dismiss every body else from being Followers of it. *He that can receive it, let him receive it.* If the Promise of this Life added to that which is to come effectually induces but few sincere Votaries; the Number must be greatly diminished, if the future World must be thrown out of Consideration, and denied its proper Influence; which is so peculiarly appropriated to secure and promote its Practice in all its Branches.

IT must be confessed likewise, That these Sentiments, such as they are, are perfectly consonant to the System of *modern Deism*. For, if the future World, and our happy or unhappy Condition there, can only be known by Revelation, it must be inconsistent with their recommendation of Virtue, to admit of Motives drawn from thence, as long as they reject Revelation. The witty Earl of *Rochester* spoke their Sentiments at once, “That they were equally disengardful of *Rewards* as *Punishments*; one as “too high to attain by our slight Services; the “other, too extreme to be inflicted for Sin†.”

* Pag. 21, 22.

† *Some Passages of his Life*, p. 54.

The Vulgar of the Heathen World seem to have had much the Advantage over most of their Philosophers in this matter. They for the most part tenaciously believed a future State, where the Wicked in general were to be punished, and the Good rewarded; tho' the Particulars of it were as ridiculous, as Poety could invent it: Still the Thing, in its confused Notion, had an Influence upon their Actions. Whilst their Philosophers made a shift to dispute themselves very cunningly out of the Belief of it: Conjecture and Problem was all the Certainty they had to rely upon, which had no more Influence than a Dream. *Somnia sunt non docentis, sed optantis* ||. They could shew their Eloquence fast enough in praising Virtue, whilst they left the Practice to the Vulgar, and made good the Saying, *Virtus laudatur, & alget*.

THUS *Sadoc* the Founder of the *Sadducees*, giving Ear to his Master *Antigonus*, “ who often
“ inculcates to his Scholars, that they ought not
“ to serve God in a servile Manner with respect
“ to the Rewards, but out of the filial Love
“ and Fear only, which they ow'd unto him,
“ inferred from thence, that there were no Rewards at all after this Life, no Resurrection,
“ no future State, but all the Rewards which
“ God gave to those who served him were in
“ this Life only. * ”

THE primitive *Epicureans*, tho' they denied Providence having any concern with the present World, yet declared their Adherence to Virtue for the sake of the Delight and Pleasure of it. The *Stoicks* admitted Providence in part, and Fate in part; but when Pain and Suffering hap-

|| *Cicero*. * *Prideaux's Connection*, Vol. II. P. 1. p. 68.

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pen'd to stand between Virtue and its own sole Reward in this Life, and offered to rectify their Notion, and place their unsupported Heroism somewhere else, they were forced to fly in the Face of Nature, and deny with Tears in their Eyes, and aking Hearts, That Pain or Suffering in this World was any Evil. The Case of *Possidonus* is well known.

AND as nothing can be a Support under Evil but the Hope of *after-Good*, their Distress was very pitiful in the want of Revelation to assure them of that after-Good. For the Hopes of that after-Good is a Balance to the Evils, Misfortunes, and Inequalities of Life present ; and the proper Recourse to and Anticipation of that, brings the Happiness of this Life upon a Level and Equality. “ Those just Measures (says “ Mr. *Lock*) of Right and Wrong, which Necessity had any where introduced, the Civil “ Laws prescribed, or Philosophy recommended, stood not on their true Foundations. “ They were look'd on as Bonds of Society and “ Conveniencies of common Life, and laudable “ Practices. But where was it that their *Obligation* was thoroughly known and allowed, “ and they receiv'd as Précepts of a Law ; of “ the highest Law, the Law of Nature ? That “ could not be without a clear Knowledge and “ Acknowledgment of the Law-maker, and the “ great Rewards and Punishments, for those that “ would or would not obey them. † ”

BUT when St. *Paul* address'd his Audience, at *Athens*, which consisted of these two sort of Philosophers ||, he insinuates not one Word into their darling Notions of the Beauty of Virtue,

† *Reasonable of Christ*. p. 275.

|| *Acts* xvii. 18, &c.

or its Self-competency for a Reward ; nor yet exhorted them to Repentance from the Baseness and Turpitude of Vice ; but from the solid Topicks of Religion, the Consideration of God as Maker, Benefactor, and Judge of the World in Righteousness ; acquainting them with the particular Person, *Jesus*, ordain'd to be the final Punisher, and Rewarder of Mens Actions ; and therefore were commanded, in his Name, to Repent ; upon the Assurance given of that Appointment, from God's raising him from the Dead. This was adding the Knowledge of the *Saviour of the World* to the true Creed of Natural Religion, viz. *That God is, and that he is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek him.*

A CREED undoubtedly derived down upon the World, from the Original *Promise* of the Mediator. And they, before the Flood, who diligently came to God, and worshipp'd him in Virtue of the *Second* Article of it, worshipp'd, in effect, in Virtue of the Mediator, through whom God made himself, according to the Intent of Promise, a *Rewarder* of those who walk'd in his ways ; and consequently a Punisher of those who did not : and to convince the Ante-diluvian World, that *he*, the Lover of Virtue, and not Virtue itself, was the Rewarder of its Servants, translated *Enoch* to himself ; a Demonstration that another World, not this, was, from the Beginning, intended to be the Reward of that Faith in God, and that Righteousness which flowed from it. And *Job* after the Flood, without any express Prophecy to revive and support the Faith of that *Promise* (which was the *Intent* of Prophecy * in virtue of the Tradition of it,

* As the present Bishop of *Salisbury* has excellently made appear.

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was accepted of God, and had that Confidence in his Redeemer as to expect † the Resurrection of his Body from him. So that as Prophecy went out from the Beginning, to one Lineage, wherein it was to have its Accomplishment in the actual Appearance of the Mediator ; so the Tradition of it went out also from the Beginning to all the rest of the World ; and God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness in consequence of that Faith, is accepted of him.

IN the first Covenant God is expressly mention'd as a Punisher, which implies a Rewarder ; in the second *expressly* mention'd as a *Rewarder* : *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God eternal Life through Jesus Christ.* Man being for the Transgressions of the first Covenant under a State of temporal Punishment, the mention and Belief of God as a *Rewarder* was most wanting, and agreeable to human Nature, to recover the Balance of the Passions to their primitive Submission to Reason. That Speciality of Belief, as necessary to Religion, as the general Persuasion that God is, directly leads to, and implies Rewards in a future Life. For, if God does not in Fact, always reward his Servants in this, it demonstrably follows that he will as assuredly do it in another World, as that he exists. Many of the better Philosophers, as *Socrates*, *Epicurus*, who joined Profit and Self-advantage to Virtue, and made them inseparable in the Issue, and in the Care of the Gods, seem to have been Retainers to this very Faith. *Arian* upon the latter argues, “ That if Piety and Profit did

† See this clearly made out in the same Book, by the same Author.

“ not go together, Piety would be preserv’d in
 “ none; the Reason is, because nothing is so na-
 “ tural to us, as to affect and pursue our own
 “ Advantage; so that if you place what is holy
 “ and just in that which *profits*, you preserve
 “ them; but if you separate what is honest from
 “ what is advantageous, you destroy what is just
 “ and honest, as being weighed down by Pro-
 “ fit*.” *Socrates* is represented by *Cicero de*
Leg. 1. as openly detesting those who first di-
 vided the Profitable from the Honest, and thought
 that Gain was not *confined* to the Bounds of Vir-
 tue, because he held that Doctrine to be the
 Source of all Crimes.

How very false therefore, as being so very
 unnatural, is the Religion of *modern* Deists?
 Who are so romantick in their Commendations,
 and pretended Pursuits of the Beauty and Charms
 of Virtue, as to esteem the Motives of Profit,
 Self-Advantage, or future Rewards, mean, for-
 did, and servile. And as this faulty Notion is
 systematically espous’d by a much more consi-
 derable Pen, than the Author of *Christianity as*
old, &c. I proceed to consider, and refute his
 pernicious Sentiments, from the Nature of Things.
 This very Author acknowledges, “ The Sum of
 “ Philosophy is, to learn what is *just* in Society,
 “ and *beautiful* in Nature, and the Order of the
 “ World†.”

THEY are chiefly contain’d in the famous *In-*
quiry concerning Virtue. “ Nor do we say, that
 “ he is a *good Man*, when having his Hands tied
 “ up, he is hinder’d from doing the Mischief he
 “ designs, or (which is in a Manner the same)

* Lib. I. cap. 27. Lib. II. cap. 22. Lib. III. cap. 3.

† *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 161.

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“ when he abstains from executing his ill Purpose; thro’ a Fear of some impending Punishment, or thro’ the Allurements of some exterior Reward. || ” This noble Author makes the *Goodness* or *Illness* of Man to depend upon his *Affection*; who then only, as it afterwards follows, “ is supposed *Good*, when the Good or “ Ill of the System to which he has relation, is “ the immediate Object of some Passion or Affec- “ tion moving in him.” “ Whatsoever there- “ fore is done which happens to be advantageous “ to the Species [or Publick] thro’ an Affection “ merely towards Self-good, does not imply any “ more Goodness in the Creature than as the “ Affection itself is good. Let him, in any Par- “ ticular, act ever so well, if at the Bottom it “ be that selfish Affection alone which moves, “ he is in himself still Vicious. Nor can any “ Creature be consider’d otherwise, when the “ Passion towards Self-good, *tho’ ever so mode- “ rate*, is his real Motive in the doing that, to “ which a natural Affection for his Kind ought “ by right to have inclined him *.”

So that Self-Affection or Consideration of *private* Good or Interest, tho’ ever so moderate, tho’ consistent with, tho’ subordinate to the Good of others, and the Interest and Advantage of the Publick, must not be admitted at any rate, as a Motive to serve the Publick; but rejected as vicious, ill, unnatural, depraved. And the good, natural, uncorrupt Motive for serving others and the Publick, must be drawn from Affection to others and the Publick only, under the Witness and Inspection of the governing Mind, or Deity; that this gives Denomination of *Virtue, Worth,*

Honesty, Integrity, Right, Moral Beauty, Order, CHAP.
Harmony, &c. And consequently that practising XVI.
upon the Motive of Self-Advantage, or private
Good, must be the reverse.

“ Now, as to the Belief of a *Deity*, and how
“ Men are influenced by it ; we may consider,
“ in the first Place, on what Account Men yield
“ Obedience, and act in Conformity to such a
“ supreme Being. It must be either *in the Way*
“ *of his Power*, as presupposing some Disadvan-
“ tage or Benefit to accrue from him : Or *in*
“ *the Way of his Excellency and Worth*, as think-
“ ing it the Perfection of Nature to imitate and
“ resemble him. If (as in the first Case) there
“ be a Belief or Conception of a *Deity* who is
“ consider’d only as *powerful* over his Creatures,
“ and enforcing Obedience to his *absolute Will*
“ by particular Rewards and Punishments ; and
“ if on this Account thro’ Hope merely of *Re-*
“ *ward*, or Fear of *Punishment*, the Creature be
“ incited to do the Good he hates, or restrain’d
“ from doing the Ill to which he is not other-
“ wise in the least Degree averse ; there is in
“ this Case no Virtue, or Goodness whatso-
“ ever †.”

AGAIN : “ Nor can this Fear, Hope [of fu-
“ ture Punishment, or Reward] *consist* in reality
“ with Virtue, or Goodness ; if it either stands
“ as *essential* to any moral Performance, or as a
“ *considerable Motive* to any Act, of which some
“ better Affection ought *alone* to have been a
“ sufficient Cause. It may be consider’d withal,
“ that in this religious sort of Discipline, the

† *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 54, 55.

“ Principle of *Self-Love*, which is naturally so prevailing in us, being no way moderated or restrain’d, but rather improv’d and made stronger every Day by the Exercise of the Passions in a Subject of more extended Self-Interest ; there may be Reason to apprehend lest the Temper of this kind should extend itself in general thro’ all the Parts of Life. For if the Habit be such as to occasion, in every Particular, a stricter Attention to Self-good and private Interest, *it must insensibly diminish* the Affections towards publick Good, or the Interest of Society ; and introduce a certain Narrowness of Spirit, which (as some pretend) is peculiarly observable in the devout Persons and Zealots of almost every religious Persuasion ||.”

HERE are several Things supposed : That the Deity influences Mens Actions but two Ways, by the Way of Power, or by the Way of Example. Yet afterwards, in order to give the Preference to *Theism* above *Atheism*, he admits of another, the *Inspection* of the supreme Being for producing the *Shame* of Ill-doing, and the *Honour* of Well-doing, *in this present Life* *.

THE Deistical Scheme will admit of no higher End of the Deity’s being Spectator of human Action : Because the Shame and Honour to be divulged hereafter in Retrospect to past Behaviour here, supposes a solemn Judgment to come, which necessarily moreover supposes *positive legal* Rewards and Punishments (for what Occasion for a *Judge* to distribute Rewards and Pu-

nishments, which, according to them, are and can be no other than the *natural* Consequences of Virtue and Vice?) And as *positive legal* Rewards and Punishments cannot influence, because they can't be known without Revelation ; as long as they reject this, they can do no less, consistently with themselves, than reject the Influence of the other ; and so confine Shame and Honour resulting from that Inspection to this Scene of Things only : where, I am of Opinion, it will have no Influence upon private Actions, but upon a Supposition of their being brought to Account in the open publick Judgment declar'd by the Gospel.

HE allows of the Influence of the *Deity* by way of Inspection to the End mentioned ; and also of *Example* in Benevolence and Beneficence, as the only genuine virtuous Spring of Action, as far as the Consideration of *Deity* has any Share in it : And disallows the Influence of his *Power*, as the Opposite of it. But then he should not have connected to that Consideration, as he does, *Rewards* and *Punishments*. For all the Ideas of them, with respect to their taking place, are relative, not to Power, but to *Justice* : And in order to depreciate the Motives that are virtuously and dutifully drawn from Rewards and Punishments, he places the *Deity* in a quite different Aspect before those who make use of those Motives, than what they behold him in, who are actually influenc'd by them.

THEY don't at all view him in *his* Picture of *Power*, exercising an *absolute Will*, or enforcing Obedience by particular Rewards and Punishments. Who but a *Deist* has such an Idea of

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God, in his reveal'd Will? No, they look upon his Will, not as absolute, or capricious, but as governing by the *Reason* and according to the *Nature* of Things, as has been shewn †; and that his *particular* Rewards and Punishments flow from his Wisdom and Goodness, and will be duly put in Execution by his Justice. The previous denouncing such Sanctions is a Contradiction to an *arbitrary* Will; because it gives every Body an Opportunity to act so, as to escape any ill Effects from such a Will. Whether there is indeed Virtue and Goodness, which he denies to be in Actions influenc'd by such Motives, will be consider'd in its Place.

HE supposes further, that Self-Affection or Regard to private Good in this World, being itself a vicious Motive with Regard to serving the Publick and consulting the Good of others, as he had maintain'd before ||; so here ‡ the Exercise of that Self-Love improved and made stronger in a Subject of more *extended* Self-Interest, *i. e.* *future* Reward in another World, spoke of in the Paragraph before, has a Tendency to *diminish* the *Affections* towards *Publick Good* or the *Interest* of *Society*: And he confirms this by the Example of the *Narrowness* of *Spirit* observable in *devout* Persons and *Zealots* of every *Religion*. I shall not answer for every devout or zealous Person even of the Christian Religion, because several exert a Zeal without Knowledge where to place it, or Prudence when to use it; and therefore the Fault is wholly in them, if they are found wanting in that, or any Instance of Mora-

† Throughout Vol. I.

|| *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 25.

‡ *Ibid.* pag. 58.

lity, and not in the Christian Religion, which CHAP.
 inspires the contrary. XVI.

To the rest of his Assertions I answer, and hope to make appear both from the Nature of Things, and from the reveal'd Will of God, *That moral Obligation is founded upon Self-Affection or Regard to private Good*, influenced and directed by the *Authority of God as its Basis*. And that the *Practice of Morality is primarily, and most strongly influenc'd from Motives and Considerations of the Good and Happiness of the Agent*.

BY SELF-AFFECTION I mean the Affection a Man regularly has, or ought to have for himself, in the *complete* Sense of *Self*. As the main Duration of his Being lies in *Futurity*, his chief Good or Happiness, or Consideration of *Self* must therefore lie there; which he is to love and regard as the ultimate End of his Actions. The Nature and Kind of his Good and Happiness must be according to the Nature and Kind of his Being. If that is complex in the Union of Body and Mind now, it will be more perfect hereafter in the greater Perfection of both of them: If the Mind consists of Faculties suited to the Perception and Enjoyment of Good (suppose Understanding, Will, and Affections) there must be relative Objects suitable to those Faculties both here, and hereafter.

In order to enjoy Happiness here and hereafter, our wise Maker has accordingly constituted us *reasonable, sociable, accountable or religious* Creatures. To consider the Relations we stand in, regulate our Affections, distinguish natural Good from moral, true Happiness from
 E 3 false,

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ing and more concerning, in order to reform and regulate the Election of the Will, and superintend all Action to the ultimate End as *sociable*, made to enjoy our Good not solitarily, but in Society, both in this World and the next; and being made sensible of the same, we are impress'd with natural Love and Affection to *Society*, as well as to our private *Selves*, as we are *Accountable* and *Religious*: We submit our Reason to his who gave us our Being with our Reason, in case he has truly revealed any Directions to our ultimate Happiness, which we could not otherwise have found out; and think ourselves bound to understand, and do his Will, and be affected with the Sanctions he has annex'd thereto.

MAN then being constituted to enjoy his Good or Happiness in Society, his Good, as a sociable intelligent Agent, must be implicated with, and *connected* to the Good of others, intelligent of their Good as we are of ours; our *Mores* or Manners respecting their Good, the Rules and Directions concerning it, in Conjunction with our own, makes it *moral* Good; and others being sensible of that *Communication* with and Respect had to them, gives it the Idea of *Good*.

BUT all that Necessity, Force, Compulsion being set aside, which subvert the Liberty of the Will, and for that Reason are Contraries to Virtue and Morality, the Qualification; and no less so to Happiness itself, which is the End. Since Happiness so much depends upon the Choice of the Will, that if it was forc'd upon, it would infallibly disgust a free Agent: it remains that Virtue and Morality must be the *Choice* of the Will,
and

and Pursuit of the Affections, as well as the Discovery of the Understanding. The Query then is, what *obliges* or induces to this moral Good; or, upon what Foundation ultimately, is the OBLIGATION to it laid? and what *fastens* it being laid? and consequently what is it that primarily, and most strongly moves Man to it? The true Answer, I presume, is Self-Affection, or the Regard the Man has to his main Happiness, as his ultimate End. And this will appear whether the Motive is drawn (1.) from Affection to Society or the Publick. Or (2.) from the Reason or Relation of Things. Or (3.) from the Command of God. The Obligation may be consider'd externally, as propounded to the Mind; or internally, as laying hold of the Will, causing its Election, and stimulating to Action.

I. IN case the Motive is taken from Affection to the Publick, or the Good of others. That the Will may not verge the wrong Way, nor Reason be guilty of Oversight thro' the Corruption of Nature, we are provided with *natural Instincts and Affections*, to prompt the Reason and solicit the Will to the doing beneficent, kind, and humane Actions. And where we are the most obliged in the Reason and Relation of Things, there the Affection is the strongest, proportionably to the Nearness of the Relation. So that some Actions of the greatest Consequence to Society are secured by three Laws, and the Performance induced by as many Motives. Parents, for Instance, are obliged *not to be bitter towards their Children* by Instinct, by Reason, and by the Law of God; so, that of *honouring Father and Mother* is founded in all three. The

CHAP. Affection lessens as the Sphere or Circle enlarges
 XVI. from the nearest to *self*, to the outmost Circle of
 all, all Mankind, which is still SELF at the
 farthest Distance ; and tho' Man is restrain'd
 from the commerce of Beneficence by the limitation of Power, yet he is indefeasibly entitled to the Benevolence of the Mind, and to all the good Effects of that, as Opportunity offers. To be defective therefore in, and insensible of the obliging Instincts of Nature in the nearer Spheres within our Power, is a greater Crime than to be defective in the remotest, and such a Violation of the Law of Nature, as to be *worse than an Infidel* ; for that is a Transgression of that *Faith of Nature*, which the Heathens for the most part strictly observe. *Charity* the most extensive of all is required to be added to *Brotherly-Kindness*, *i. e.* the Love of those of the Household of Faith, which is to be added to *Godliness* * as soon as we enter that Household.

THIS Publick-Affection is not wholly the Gift of Nature ; for then every one would be possess'd of it, and where would be the Virtue ? But it is a reasonable, religious Improvement upon the Foundation of Nature ; and is to be taught, regulated, and conducted to make it a Virtue. The Measure by which it is to be regulated and conducted is *the Love of ourselves*, truly consider'd and understood ; that is certainly the first Affection and the strongest Principle in any Agent, expected to shew his Love to the Publick.

EVERY Man is supposed, other Circumstances being equal, to love himself in the highest De-

* 2 Pet. i. 7.

gree, preferably to all others, at all times, and therefore not to love himself more at one time than another, but to the End of his Days to carry an Affection to true Self, paramount to that of others. Upon this, mutual Love is grafted, and regulated by it. Upon this Principle human Society, in its present indigent Condition, is tied together by innumerable Ligaments : By as many Conveniencies of Life as the infinite Labour and Contrivance of Man has furnished for the Gratification of Self-Affection, and supplying those Wants which no Man is sufficient to of himself ; but are readily furnish'd by mutual Usefulness and corresponding Commerce. And whilst the Self-Affection of one Man is just and honest, civil and complaisant to the Self-Affection of all other Men, he enjoys all the Good of Society.

IN Acts of Beneficence and publick Spirit the Thoughts of Self-Advantage must be discarded, in one Sense ; that is, if the Action is done merely, or principally out of a Prospect of Vain-glory, to be talk'd of by Cotemporaries, or After-Ages (and who can tell whether the celebrated Deed of *Regulus* had any other Motive? *) This is an irregular serving ourselves, and not

* As to any other Pretence of being a Virtue see a few Pages after. *Laſtant. de falſa Sapientia, Lib. III. cap. 26.* according to his uſual Eloquence, obſerves of this ſort of falſe Virtue, *Ita fit ut nihil aliud ex virtute captetur niſi Gloria. Sed hæc aut ſupervacua, & brevis eſt, aut pravis hominum judiciis non ſequenda. Nullus igitur ex virtute fructus eſt, ubi virtus mortalis eſt, & caduca. Ita qui hæc locuti ſunt, umbram quandam virtutis viderunt, ipſam virtutem non viderunt. Deſixi enim fuerunt in terram ; nec vultus ſuos erigebant, ut eam poſſent intueri ; quæ ſeſe à cæli regionibus oſtendebat.*

CHAP. the Publick. Though we should *give all our*
 XVI. *Goods* to the Poor, or *lay down our Lives* for the
 ~~~~~ *Brethren*, if we have not a real Love for the  
 Poor and conscientiously intend their Good ; or,  
 if we have no *Fidelity* to the Christian Cause,  
 nor, design the *Confirmation* of that glorious  
 Faith ; we have no Charity, either to Man, or  
 God ; we serve not the Publick, but our own  
 Vanity altogether.

BUT if we take in the due Consideration of  
 Self-Affection, what we shall be benefitted in this  
 Life or the next ; by loving the Publick and  
 serving it when we are called, to bear some La-  
 bour, Hazard, or Expence ; when we consider that  
 the Enjoyment of our Good and Happiness in  
 Society here runs parallel with the Happiness and  
 Prosperity of that Society : Tho' every Sub-  
 ject has a natural Right, by the Appointment of  
 God, to Happiness in Society, and for that Rea-  
 son every supreme Magistrate is called the *Min-  
 ister of God* to that Subject *for good* ; yet as Pri-  
 vate Good is embarqu'd in the Ship of Publick  
 Good, every one in Society is bound to pro-  
 mote the Happiness of others as well as him-  
 self, and by doing so has a Claim from the So-  
 ciety, as well as from God, for securing his  
 own ; and consequently forfeits that Right to  
 his own Welfare, by disturbing, or intercepting  
 that of others ; but by consulting both we are  
 laying up a good Foundation moreover against  
 the Time to come, and *shall* reap hereafter ac-  
 cording to the Plenty or Spare of our sowing  
 here ; what Opportunity should we decline, or  
 Danger flinch from, when we see ourselves like  
 to reap the Advantage of it ? If we have not  
 our Recompence here, we are sure of it here-  
 after,

after, for whatever we may lose, or postpone in CHAP.  
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the various Ways of doing good to others ; seeing *a Cup of cold Water* shall not miss of its Reward.

THIS is regarding our *Citizenship* as we ought to do, in both Stages of our Being ; here we have no continuing City, living upon bits and crumbs of broken Happiness ; in the immovable succeeding one is *the happy Society*, when we *shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* to a full Meal of Happiness, where Charity never faileth, thither we are bid to aim, and have our Eye and Conversation principally turn'd to. There is *the Publick*, all good Men are invited to partake in, and therein seek their Advantage for ever. And the more they seek it, the more their Benevolence flows, the more their Endeavours flourish for promoting the Good of others here. Those Motives of another World being the appointed Balance against the Exorbitancy of every earthly Passion, to keep it from degenerating to a Selfishness, inconsistent with the Good of others ; and that lasting regard to self *there*, recovers us to the true Love of ourselves and others here ; preventing the ill Effects and Disorders arising from *false* Self-Interest, Ambition, Envy, Avarice, Revenge, Malice, Injustice, Oppression, Fraud, &c. So far is it from being *Selfish, Mercenary, or Servile* to be moved and induced by these Rewards in performing the relative Duties of Society, that nothing can begin, or perfect them sooner ; instead of *insensibly diminishing the Affection towards publick Good or Interest of Society*, as this Author impeaches, it sensibly and most mightily tends to augment and advance it.

BESIDES,



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BESIDES, if *true* Self-affection is the Measure and Standard of publick Affection, how should that be vicious, or depraved, or defective, or deserving to be excluded, which is to measure out the Virtue, Proportion and Quantity of the other? For should publick Affection run so high, in voluntary Oblations, as to throw away Life in a mistaken Notion of serving others (no Law of God or Defence of the Community requiring it) it ought to be branded as ridiculous, romantick, nay, as a Crime against the Publick, being in Truth a Violation of that Self-Affection and Preservation whereon the Publick subsists: An Increase of such Instances would be its Ruin, as the Care of every Individual duly preserving *self*, and reserving to commanded Occasions, is its common Preservation. So sacred and personal is Preservation to the Interest and Happiness of SELF, that in *equal* Circumstances, it takes place of regard to all others; and at Years of Discretion is unalienable; as is every Man's private Judgment of the *essential* Means tending to that End.

WHAT is the Publick to any private Person unless his Interest and Good is included so as to enjoy in Partnership with it, contentedly sharing Profit and Loss, according to his Station? The Comforts and Benefits he consults to himself, are proposed only to be enjoy'd in concert with the Good of others, which together with himself make the Whole. Does not the diligent Bee, whilst it is clubbing its particular Industry and Fidelity to its Publick, propose to enjoy in Winter the Fruits of Summer toil, as securely as the best of them? When true Self-advantage moves

moves and stimulates to Action with this Regulation and Deference, it moves as God, and Nature, and Society would have it, the Man is performing the Condition of his Bond, both to God, and Society ; in Spite of what the said Author affirms as above, *No Creature can be considered otherwise [than vicious] when the Passion towards Self-good, though ever so moderate, is his real Motive.* And when it moves in that moderate subordinate Sphere, the more diligent we are in that Pursuit, the truer we are to the Publick, as well as ourselves.

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FOR if the Good of the Publick consists in the aggregate Good of so many Particulars as that Publick consists of, when every one pursues his own Prosperity in Connection with that of others, every one promotes his own and others at the same time ; and so doing right to every Man, and himself, takes the right way of promoting the Prosperity of the whole. And when the Love of Self joins, as it always ought, to make it *true* Interest or Love of Self, with the Love of others, the Action is carried on and performed so much the better, with the Increase of a double Power of two Motives, both Social, Rational, and Virtuous. Nor is Self-advantage any Bribe to the Action, because that Consideration is part of the Action, and part of the Virtue ; the principal Stake, and the *Primum Mobile*, moving every Man to act what is best for himself, both in his Publick, and Private Capacity.

THE Advancement of Self-happiness is the *ultimate* End ; and the sincere Endeavours of every one jointly in his Sphere, to promote the Happiness

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pineſs of others, are the *Means* ſubordinate to it by the Appointment of God. By ſuch *Means* a Man may merit of *Society*; but neither by the Means, nor the End can he merit of God; becauſe both were his Duty; and as ſuch will meet with the Approbation of God, himſelf, and all wiſe Men.

I CONCLUDE therefore that the Motive or moral Obligation to that ſociable Action or Virtue has the *Self-good* and Happineſs of the Agent, in its *true* Senſe, for its *Baſis*. To ſeparate that and expel it out of the Action as excentrick, is to caſt a Damp upon publick Good, and put aſunder what God and Nature have join'd together. The Prudence and Self-Approbation of the Agent will always be grounded upon a joint Promotion of the Good of each, and in the Neglect of neither. And though the Praise and Eſteem of others, whether coteemporary, or in diſtant Times, reſpects the Agent only from the Good *others* receive from his Action, yet thoſe Admirers muſt ſuppoſe the *other* Conſideration to make it *prudent*, and compleat the Glory of it; according to that Maxim, *If thou art Wiſe, thou ſhalt be Wiſe for thyſelf*, Prov. ix. 12.

No body therefore denies what our Author ſays when he further explains himſelf, *Miſcellan. Reflect.* \* “ That for a Creature whoſe natural  
“ End is Society [he ſhould have ſaid *Happineſs*  
“ in Society] *to operate as is by Nature*-[better,  
“ by the God of Nature] *appointed him towards*  
“ *the Good of ſuch his Society, or Whole, is in*  
“ *reality to purſue his own natural and proper*

\* *Charaſt.* Vol. III. pag. 223.

“ *Good.*

“ Good. And that to operate *contrary-wise*, or  
 “ by such Affections as sever from that com-  
 “ mon Good, or publick Interest, is in reality,  
 “ *to work towards his own natural and proper*  
 “ *Ill.*”

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AND thus with respect to *Publick Spirit*, and  
*Generosity*, every Person, in every Station of Life,  
 may perform Heroick Actions, according to his  
 Sphere; or in the Words of an ingenious Wri-  
 ter †, “ No external Circumstances of Fortune,  
 “ no involuntary Disadvantages, can exclude  
 “ any Mortal from the *most heroick Virtue*. For  
 “ how small soever the *Moment* of publick Good  
 “ be, which any one can accomplish, yet if his  
 “ *Abilities* are proportionably small, the *Quo-*  
 “ *tient*, which expresses the Degree of *Virtue*,  
 “ may be as great as any whatsoever. Thus  
 “ not only the *Prince*, the *Statesman*, the *Gene-*  
 “ *ral*, are capable of *true Heroism*, tho’ these  
 “ are the chief Characters, whose Fame is dif-  
 “ fused through various Nations and Ages; but  
 “ when we find in an *honest Trader*, the *kind*  
 “ *Friend*, the *faithful prudent Adviser*, the *cha-*  
 “ *ritable and hospitable Neighbour*, the *tender Hus-*  
 “ *band* and *affectionate Parent*, the *sedate yet*  
 “ *cheerful Companion*, the *generous Assistant* of  
 “ *Merit*, the *cautious Allayer* of *Contention* and  
 “ *Debate*, the *Promoter* of *Love* and *good Under-*  
 “ *standing* among Acquaintances; if we consider,  
 “ that these were *all* the good Offices which his  
 “ Station in the World gave him an Opportu-  
 “ nity of performing to Mankind, we must  
 “ judge *this Character* really as *amiable*, as those,

† *Inquiry concerning moral Good and Evil*, by Hutcheson,  
 pag. 194.

“ whose



CHAP. “ whose external Splendor dazzles an injudi-  
 XVI. “ cious World into an Opinion *that they are the*  
 “ *only Heroes in Virtue.*”

BUT publick Spirit or Love of Country in *Governors* and *Rulers* of Society, besides Care at home, has a larger Extent of Conscience and Sphere of Duty with regard to *other Countries* (and almost all other Countries, by Navigation, are Neighbours to a *maritime* Power.) For as their private Kingdom is but as one Individual in respect to all others ; so, when no Injury is offer'd, mediately or immediately, none ought to be done purely to the Advantage or Extent of *Empire* of that particular Kingdom ; that being a vicious Self-love, a kind of Piety to Country that is really impious, being a Sin against *universal* Benevolence, the publick Spirit or Humanity due to the Rights of *all* Men, and consequently such a Love of Country like the *Romans* \*, and lately the *grand Monarch*, which gloried in the Conquest of innocent Neighbours, was as unfit to be recommended by the Gospel, as *Piracy*, or *Robbery*. The *Romans* terminated their Virtues to this World, and whilst they were severally free Agents incorporating themselves to that End, they became Instruments in the Hand of Providence for mighty Purposes, in taking Provinces of the World from others and giving to them ; that being their View and their Heaven to enlarge the Bounds of Empire, to enjoy their own Liberty, and take away that of other People. The Virtues subservient to that End were *Roman* Virtues, full of Renown. And so long

\* Quæ omnia non utique Virtutes, sed Virtutum sunt ever-  
 siones. Vid. *Lact. Lib. VI. cap. 6.*

as they practis'd them *more Majorum*, as a Law and Fashion of a *Roman*, *i. e.* with a Thirst of publick Glory, join'd to a Contempt of private Wealth and Luxury, they increased in Empire ; kept that, and Liberty\* : But as fast as Corruption enter'd, lost both with the same Pace, they advanced in each. But the Virtue of *Great Britain* and its *Rulers* is much more glorious in placing itself in the reverse ; who, having it in their Power, according to that certain Maxim of *Tully*, *Qui mare tenet, eum necesse est RERUM potiri*, (And is there any other Empire upon this Globe so large as the Ocean ? Or so fitted to hold the *Balance* of at least *Europe*, *Africa*, and *America* ?) Yet religiously abstain from encroaching upon any of the Rights and Liberties of any of their Neighbours ; placing the very Honour and Conscience of their Dominion, in preserving the Peace, and preventing any dangerous Encroachment, one upon another, among neighbouring and respectful Nations.

It is commonly said, that *Compassion*, *Gratitude*, *Friendship*, are disinterested, and have not their Motives from Self-advantage ; which is true in a comparative Sense ; that there is *less* Consideration of immediate Self in them, than in other sociable Efforts : But still *Self* moves in each of them, and not at all to their Disparagement. These Benevolences are originally founded in Instinct, or that Affection to Society planted in us, as their Source ; and are cultivated by Reason and Consideration : For as much as some

\* *Patriæ rem unusquisque, non suam, augeri properabat, pauperque in divite, quam dives in paupere imperio versari inalebat. Val. Max. Lib. IV. cap. 4.*

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THE first very naturally and instantaneously shoots up from the universal Root of Instinct, for rescuing from those Evils our common Nature is liable to ; nor can any refuse it to a proper Object, but such as are lost to Humanity. The assisting such unhappy Objects is so far from opposing Self-affection, that it is an actual relief to its Commotions ; a probable Security moreover of the like Usage under our Misfortunes ; and without doubt *a well-pleasing Sacrifice* of Thanksgiving to God, that we have hitherto escaped.

GRATITUDE has its Foundation likewise in Nature, and in such a vehement Attraction to Benevolence, and reciprocal Returns to the Benefactor, according to our Ability ; and so strong an Impulse upon the Will, that it is in a manner irresistible ; if any thing can be said to *constrain* and compel it, it is that, and that is said of the *Love of Christ* conferr'd upon Man. And are not those Returns both in Nature, and Grace, the most generative and productive of fresh Benefits ? and can *Self* forget that ?

FRIENDSHIP is very often grounded in a natural Affinity and Cognation of Souls, from a perceiv'd Similitude of Manners and Dispositions :

tions: We cannot chuse the Nearness of our Blood, whilst an Union as near, and dear, and faithful, is frequently chosen; and that lives and subsists upon mutual Kindnesses and a Reciprocation of good Offices, which supposes *Self* on both sides. But what an incoherent recoiling Objection does *Characteristicks* bring against *Christianity*, because it does not expressly allot extraordinary Reward hereafter for extraordinary Friendship between two particular Persons here? Does not that restrain and confine his own boasted Benevolence, which he makes so generally obligatory? And can he consistently declare that to be so particularly rewardable, which is a manifest and sometimes vicious Limitation of, and Exception to his own Principle? It is a sign he was hard put to it for Objections, when he makes use of such. Do not those Friendships mutually reward themselves, when *that peculiar Relation* happens to be *form'd by a Consent and Harmony of Minds, mutual Esteem, and reciprocal Tendernefs and Affection*, by blazoning Fame and making two Heroes? Does Christianity, which in all things improves Nature, forbid it? Does it not leave Nature to its own Attraction in *Similitudes*, when they happen to concur? And are there not accordingly Instances of such *particular dear* Friendship among Christians; whilst that Religion nobly *enlarges* the Affection, and would bring all Mankind into the Sphere of its Attraction? And is not the Instance of the greatest Friend to Mankind our *Saviour's dying for Enemies*, illustrated from that very *Exception* he brings against the Apostle? *Rom. v. 7.* \*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 102.



DID not their very Enemies, with great Admiration, give that Character of the primitive Christians, *See how they love one another?* And does not *Simplicius*, who has wrote so very well upon Friendship, declare, “ That a few Instances would be some Comfort in this miserable Age; when the Vices and Vileness of Mankind seem to have banished it almost quite out of the World: \* ” Consequently, that *six or seven Pair of Friends* in so many Ages are mention’d as an *extraordinary* Thing. Whereas it was so common and so much better enlarg’d among Christians, it has scarce been thought worth mentioning.

So much, in all these Respects, is private Good and Advantage affianc’d with, and connected to the Good we do unto others.

II. SUPPOSE the Motive drawn from the *Relation*, and *Reasonableness* of Things. This in some Respect coincides with the former. In one, the Agent is consider’d as he stands *affected*, in the other, as he is *related* to Society. But this takes in the *Fitness* and *Congruity* of the Action, and derives the Motive and Obligation upon the Agent from the Consideration of his being so and so station’d and circumstanced in Life, equally excluding, with the former, Self-Advantage or Happiness as a faulty Principle. This is true, like the former, but not the whole Truth of the Case, that gives Force to the Motive, Spring to the Action, and a Tie to the Obligation, according to the STANDARD of Nature.

\* *Com. on Epiſt. Chap. xxxvii.*

FOR what is *Fitness* and *Congruity* as applied to Action, but a *relative* Name and Consideration of that Action, as it has a Tendency, and is adapted to some End and Purpose? All Action has some End, and every Agent is supposed to propose that in the *first* Place, as his Mark, to give a Scope and View to what he is doing. *Fitness* then must be in the Nature of a *Means* to attain, or a *Qualification* to enjoy that End.

Now the End is actually fix'd and stated by the WILL of God, who is likewise supposed to have proposed it, as the Scope of his Works and the Purpose of his Acting. The End being fix'd, the Means and Qualifications respecting that End are likewise fix'd, and connected together inseparably in the Nature of Things he has made; nor can any Agent make any Alteration either in the End, or the Means. If therefore he chuses and designs the End, he is necessarily and invariably *obliged* to chuse and pursue the Means in order to it.

TO have *Respect* unto the Recompence of Reward, is to consider the ultimate End of our Actions, and intend the Glory, Fruition, or Vision of God; and if the Virtue of *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*, or *Holiness of Truth*, Eph. iv. 24. is the preparative Qualification and improveable Image of God for that Enjoyment, that *End* must be the supreme Measure and Obligation of all our moral Actions; as the Conformity of our particular subordinate Actions to the several Laws and Rules of Virtue (all being to many Directions and Cautions to that End) constitutes their particular and special Morality.



THAT *Reference* to the End therefore seems to be the Standard to the Agent, both of the *Reasonableness*, and Morality of his Action : And not the *Agreement* of his Action to the Relation or Circumstance he is plac'd in. That indeed founds the Reason of *relative* Duties ; but what makes those Duties *moral* is the *Fitness* and Reference of them, *chosen* as such, to the End God appointed them, Happiness. The bare Knowledge and Apprehension of the Relation of Things does not induce the Agent to act, unless the said *End* of Happiness to himself, and others, is propos'd from his acting according to that Relation. And when the Action has attain'd that End, or truly intended it, it is morally good ; and is, at the same time, a Conformity to the *supreme Reason*, which has appointed those best Actions to those best Ends : And the divine Will and Commandments are so many Directions of our Actions to the Happiness of ourselves and others, in both Worlds.

WHAT other, or what better End could the Fountain of all Self-goodness and Happiness propose, in making Man, than to communicate *Happiness* to him, according to the Nature and Faculties he had given him ? The very *Glory* of Goodness consists in *communicating* itself, nor could it otherwise ever have been known. Man then being made a *free* Agent, and a *sociable* Creature ; to make his Happiness consistent with, and suitable to his Nature, it must be the Result of his *Choice* ; and enjoyable also in *Society* : Imperfectly enjoyable in this Life, more compleatly in the next. And what wiser or better Choice can he possibly make, than of that  
End

End and that Happiness which his Maker has chosen for him, and laid before him for his Acceptance or Refusal? But what greater Enforcement of, or Obligation to his Good, can be laid upon him, for determining and obliging his Will to Acceptance, than such a *Choice* laid before him?

CHAP.

XVI.

BE there never so many different Opinions about Happiness (as what it is in the present Life, where it is necessarily mix'd and imperfect, there must ever be different Sentiments, and as many Judgments as Tastes of Pleasure, and but one *Truth* to unite in, viz. that Happiness which is subordinate and leads to the total or *ultimate* Happiness hereafter) if the Author of our Being and Faculties, who best knows what is best for us in both Worlds, has shew'd us our Good and Happiness in each, all Believers of his Revelation must subscribe to his Truths and Rules concerning it: And all others will for ever be at a Loss without it.

IF Happiness then is the natural, ultimate End of Man, and that End is *chosen*, that governs and *obliges* to the Choice of the Means; and the Reference to and Consideration of the End must be the Motive in chusing and pursuing the Means: the Means will accordingly be chosen not so much for their own Sake, as for the Sake of the End. And as God, the Patron of our *particular* Happiness, and of *Society*, or *general* Happiness, has tied and connected such and such Actions in Society to general, and particular Happiness in it here, and hereafter; and that Happiness depends upon the Performance of such Actions by natural Consequence, or by



CHAP. his Appointment ; then the Performance of them  
 XVI. is a *necessary* Means or Qualification for the End ;  
 and in Regard to that, the Agent is induced and  
 obliged to observe and do them, because he can't  
 obtain his End without it.

AND because *necessary* to attain that End, that  
 shews the *Fitnes*, *Congruity*, *Reasonableness*, *Order*,  
 and *Beauty* of the Action ; as Beauty consists in a due  
*Proportion* of the Means to the End, and likewise the  
 Agreement of the Action to such a *Relation* or Circumstance of Life. If the  
 Action had not been necessary to the End, it had neither  
 been beautiful, nor orderly, nor reasonable, nor fit : But  
 as it is indispensably necessary, that renders it *fit* to be  
 done, because it so exactly *fits* the End ; *reasonable*, be-  
 cause it would be absurd to think of the End without it ;  
*orderly* as subordinate ; *beautiful*, as proportion'd to it.

TAKE away Happiness, the End to which it tends,  
 it produces nothing : What then becomes of those fine  
 Characters *Fitnes*, *Reasonableness*, &c. Do they reside  
 in the Means without the End ? Then the Action is fit  
 and reasonable, *because* it is fit and reasonable, &c. *i. e.*  
 for no Reason ; if no End is applied, no Reason is  
 offer'd, no Instance alledg'd of its *Fitnes* ; what is  
 this but a speculative resting in the Means without the  
 End, and a Recommendation of them without any Re-  
 spect unto it ? The Obligation therefore, or Inducement  
 to the Action, does not derive from dry *Truth*, *Relation*  
 of the Agent, *Fitnes* ; but in *relative Truth*, called  
*Holiness of Truth*, Eph. iv. 24. as it is in the Margin ;  
 holy Manners are expected from holy Faith,

Faith, as a pure Effect is from a pure Cause, CHAP.  
 that one should enlighten and enliven the other XVI.  
 before Men. Fitness, as it agrees with and is  
 suited to the End, makes the Means to be em-  
 braced, and pursued into Action.

God has made the Relation and Tendency between the Means and the End; and therefore commanded *moral* Good because it is naturally good, tends to, and qualifies for Happiness: And has prohibited *moral* Evil as it leads to Misery; and as Misery and Happiness are *essentially* different, so there is an *essential* Difference between the other. And those natural and immutable Tendencies, make the natural and immutable Law of pursuing the one, and avoiding the other. The Agent therefore *chusing* the Action not as an End, but a Means in Reference to Happiness, makes the *moral* Good; he co-operates with God in chusing the same End with him, and chusing and adapting the same Means. His *Mores* to God, and Society, are regulated as they ought to be, and therefore his Action is *morally* Good. The Action of *itself* is a natural Good productive of natural Happiness; but as it is *chosen* for the Sake of the Happiness, it becomes a *moral* Good, productive of Happiness suitable to, and *chosen* by a moral Agent. The *Tie* of the Obligation is fasten'd from the *End*, to the *Choice* of the Agent's Will, moving to and embracing the Means in respect to the End; whether the Obligation is consider'd with some *externally*, as proceeding from the Law or Command of those that require the Action; or *internally* with others, as inherent in the Agent.

WHY

WHY then should that be last, or least in the Action, which God and Nature has made first and greatest in it ; first in the Intention, and greatest in the Execution ? *He that duly considers the End will never do amiss.* The proposing the external Motives of Happiness or Misery, Life or Death, is setting the End of the Action before the Agent, that he may conduct himself accordingly.

OR, if the Action is consider'd as a *Qualification* for enjoying the End, Happiness ; which Qualification is as necessary in the Nature of Things, as *Taste* is to a Palate : That introduces the *moral Taste*, which seems to be a Tasting our own Happiness in Society, and at the same Time tasting the Happiness of Society.

IT remains therefore that Happiness is the Estimate and *Criterion* of the *moral Taste*, *Fitness*, *Relation*, *Truth* \*, *Beauty*, *Goodness*, *Obligation*, *Approbation*, *Reasonableness*. And consequently

\* Happiness as an End is the Choice of the Will, and that End must have Means suitable to it ; and those Means being fix'd, and immoveably settled by the God of our Nature in the Respects or Relations of Persons to Persons, or Persons to Things, in their Circumstances, as his Providence orders them, that makes the *Truth of Things* : Which the Author of the *Religion of Nature delin.* has made the Foundation of his valuable Book. Tho' in making Morality consist in respecting Truth, as *Truth*, he plainly carries the Matter too far. Because all Truth as *such* being equal, all Truth would be *equally* important ; and every Action regarding any sort of Truth would be *moral* ; and no *Difference* in moral Actions. It must therefore be those Truths, which one way or other respect the Good and Happiness of ourselves, or others, that concern a *moral* Agent, or can come under a *moral* Consideration,

quently that the Dispute has been about Words, which receive their full and ultimate Meaning from the other ; and are all reconciled in it.

WHAT is *Publick-Affection* but multiplying the Love of *Self*, by the Rule and Order of *Citizenship* in both Worlds ?

WHAT is the *moral Taste*, but that Hunger and Thirst in our Nature after Happiness ; directed to *Righteousness*, in order to accomplish it, and be satisfied ?

WHAT

sideration, as Means to that End ; if they offer *true* Means to that End, they cure Ignorance and Mistake ; but it is the Office of the Understanding to distinguish of that as its proper Object. The Understanding is the mental Eye of the Agent to see his Way to the End : But it is not the Eye that moves the Feet to walk in the Way, but *the Will* ; Self-motion springs from that, and that is the *only moral* Agent in the Man, and when it chuses an Action or Means to that End, it becomes moral.

He says, *pag. 52*, the truest Definition of Natural Religion is, *The Pursuit of Happiness by the Practice of Reason and Truth*. It is plain then, that he very rightly makes Happiness the End of his Truth : But the *Practice of Reason and Truth* seems a very unaccurate Expression ; had he said chusing *true* Means by the Discernment of *Reason*, and putting them in *practice* to that End, he would have made his Truth both eligible and practicable, and so brought it into Morality. His System of Truth is vastly beholden to Revelation, tho' unacknowledg'd, and made all to proceed from a *mere* Philosopher : But what Philosopher before the Appearance of the Gospel ever taught some of those Truths, or put any of them in such a Light as they appear in that Book ?

However the Deists have no Reason, as I doubt some of them think they have, to plume themselves upon it ; for they can find no Arguments there to *contradict* Revelation ; but they may please to read their own Condemnation in these Words of the Author. “ Here I begin to be very sensible  
“ how



## CHAP.

## XVI.

WHAT is the Faculty of *Reason* given for, but to find out Truth, and the Relation of Things, and Persons, as they *affect* and *concern* our Happiness? Speculative Truth, and Relation \* may serve for Contemplation, and entertain the Faculty hereafter, when it is more at leisure. But now is the Scene of Action, Probation, and Distinction of the Ways and Means which lead to our End. Tho' it shews the *Will* the *Reasonableness* of the Action never so clearly from Truth and the Relation of Things, it only clears the Eye-sight of *video meliora proboq*; the Judgment is often convinc'd, and the Man no Convert. But the Will is guided most in its Choice by the Motive, and gain'd by the Consideration of Advantage and *Happiness*; and that, which is *eternal*, is adapted to influence most, and *prefer* that Choice as most reasonable, which makes it an Agent to the *best* Purpose.

“ how much I want a *Guide*. But as the *Religion of Nature*  
 “ is my Theme, I must *at present* content myself with that  
 “ Light which *Nature* affords; my Business being, as it  
 “ seems, only to shew what a Heathen *Philosopher* without  
 “ any other help, and almost *αυτοδιδασκῶ*, may be sup-  
 “ posed to think. I hope that neither the doing this, nor any  
 “ thing else contain'd in this *Delineation* can be the least Pre-  
 “ judice to any other *true Religion*. Whatever is immediately  
 “ *reveal'd from God*, must, as well as any Thing else, be  
 “ treated as being *what it is*; which cannot be, if it is not  
 “ treated with the highest Regard, *believed* and *obey'd*. That  
 “ therefore which has been so much insisted on by me, and is  
 “ as it were the Burden of my Song, is so far from *under-*  
 “ *mining true reveal'd Religion*, that it rather paves the Way  
 “ for its Reception.” pag. 211.

\* See the present *Dean of Christ-Church's Answer to Christianity as old, &c.* pag. 245.

So high as you can lay the *Supposition* or Design of fixing such an End, and constituting such a Society, or System, so high you may place the Relation, Fitness and Obligation : One will be immutable and eternal in the same Sense the other is. But the *actual Commencement* of the Relation, Fitness, and Obligation, can be no older than the first beginning of such a System, or Society ; being no more in Fact and Reality than the *Consequence* of the actual Existence of such Beings.

IF the WILL of God is the Measure of his Power in giving Existence to such a System, and likewise of his Goodness in communicating Happiness, and fixing that for the End ; which must be granted, unless you affirm he is a *necessary*, not a *free* Agent with respect to the Effects either of his Power, or Goodness ; and if the End was *fix'd* by his *Will*, and that End is Happiness, then all Notion of *Arbitrariness* is shut out from *his* Will.

AND as the End determines the Means, and he could not will any Means inconsistent with the End that he had willed, then the moral Virtues proceed likewise from, and are *fix'd* by his *Will*, as well as the End. Then the moral Reason, Relation, and Fitness of Things seem to depend upon his *Will*, and not his Will upon them for its Determination ; seeing they receiv'd their consequent Being, Existence, and Constitution, from the previous Determination of that Will. Wisdom and Power being eternally attendant upon that Will when it has a Mind to act ; ever knowing what is best, secures the ever willing

CHAP. willing what is best ; ever willing what is best  
 XVI. establishes eternal Holiness, out of which arises  
 eternal Goodness and Justice ; out of them arise  
 his Commands, which are holy, just and good.

CONCERNING those other Perfections, the Exercise whereof “ depends upon his [God’s] “ *Will* ; such are his Justice, Veracity, Goodness, Mercy, and all other *moral* Perfections ; “ the absolute Immutability of *these* is not indeed so obvious and self-evident ; because it “ depends on the Unchangeableness, not only of “ his *Essence*, but of his *Will* also. Nevertheless, upon careful Consideration, the Unchangeableness of *these* likewise will no less certainly “ appear : Because in a Being who always knows “ what is right to be done, and can never possibly be deceiv’d, or aw’d, or tempted, or “ imposed upon ; his general *Will* or *Intention*, “ of doing always what is best and most fit and “ right, will in Reality, though not upon the “ *same* Ground of natural *Necessity*, yet in Event, “ and upon the whole, be as *certainly and truly* “ *unchangeable*, as his very *Essence* itself—With “ the Father of Lights, there is no Variableness “ nor Shadow of Turning.\*” The supreme Perfection is the Measure of all Things : *Rectum est index sui & obliqui*.

AND if that is the *Rectitude* of the divine Will to be ever steady to Good, and determin’d to that which is *best in the whole*, in the Constitution of Things he has willed ; the *moral* Attributes seem to flow from that, as their Fountain ; his essential Holiness is his essential, yet

\* Dr. Clark’s *Posthumous Serm.* Vol. I. pag. 147, 148.



free Adherence to Good. For whatever is *moral* in God, or Man, must have *Will* and *Choice* for its Root and Origin. The Choice or Energy of the Will, the universal Principle of moral Action, authenticates the Action, and denominates it moral; chusing, God leading the Way to shew what is, and is not Good, what he marks, distinguishes, and directs to be so, and avoiding what he disapproves and forbids, so that Will to Good is the same in kind in God, in Angels and in Men, tho' they differ in Degree, *i. e.* in Adherence to Good. Man's Degree is to be Followers of God as dear Children: — Rom. xii. 4. *Abhorring that which is Evil, cleaving to that which is Good,* suitable to his diminutive Human Capacity, And as the whole of Morality seems to be a System of *practical* Means and Ends, graduated into several intermediate Ends, and all subordinate to the ultimate End; the Rule of Morality, *Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Fitness and Unfitness,* seems to be fix'd in the fix'd Respect of the Means to the End; intended, chosen, and put in practice for the Sake of the Ends that are intermediate, and that which is ultimate. And the *Gradation* of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, &c. will arise, as the Means affect it, *i. e.* promote, or hinder the mediate, or ultimate End: The last being the greatest Concern to the Agent. And the *Distinction* of Good and Evil, &c. will consist and be fix'd in the fix'd Suitableness or Agreement, Disagreement or Contrariety, of the Means to the respective Ends. And that Distinction will be as *durable*, and *immutable*, as the Will of God has actually fix'd the ultimate End and Enjoyment of Happiness in another World, and the subordinate End or Taste of it in this, for every Member



CHAP. Member of Society; and *immutably* connected  
 XVI. the Means to the Ends. And as God *governs*  
 by the Truth and Righteousness of that Rule,  
 and by the Improvements made to it by his re-  
 veal'd Will; that Rule, with the Improve-  
 ments, where discover'd, is a fix'd Law both to  
 God, and Man. And consequently Righteous-  
 ness, Truth, Love of Virtue, and Hatred of  
 Sin, &c. in the Proceedings of Men, will be of  
 the *same kind* in the Proceedings of God, but of  
 a larger Compass.

COMMANDS therefore resulting from his Will  
 being always so laid in the Nature and Rela-  
 tions of Things, as to consult the best, *i. e.*  
 Happiness of the moral Agent, he governs ac-  
 cording to his free Choice of Happiness; it is  
 much the same Thing to say, the Thing com-  
 manded is finally holy, just, and good to that  
 Creature, because he commands it, as to say be-  
 cause it is holy, just and good in its own Nature  
 to that Creature, therefore he commands it.  
 Since the *Fitness* of Things does not exist before  
 the *Will* of God, to dispute whether the Fitness  
 of Things, or the Will of God obliges, is a  
 Dispute only of Words. The Goodness of  
 Things consists in their Fitness for answering the  
 Ends they were appointed to; the Goodness and  
 Virtue of Agents in this World appear in re-  
 gulating their Actions in Conformity to the Will  
 of God, which has chosen and fitted such and  
 such Actions to the final Happiness he has con-  
 stituted Man to; and to consult that in his moral  
 Conduct, is the same Thing as to consult the  
 Glory of God, or the Glory of such an Ap-  
 pointment. Such a moral Fitness of the Means  
 relative to his own Happiness, the End accord-  
 ing

ing to the Will of God, is the Rule or Law of his Action, and of his Obligation. And so every Sin against God and our Neighbour is a Sin also against a Man's self, being a Transgression of that Law, which is a Direction to his own Happiness. In the last Place,

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III. SUPPOSE the Motive drawn from the *Command* of God. But he knows our Nature too well to give forth Laws and Commandments without annexing *Sanctions* to them. He knows he has no Authority over the free Choice and elective Faculty of Man in Comparison of what those Sanctions give him. Had he ordain'd us for Misery, we could have no Respect or Obligation at all to him : But as he propounds *Happiness*, as well as Misery, to our *Choice*, at the Option of our own Behaviour ; and has done so very much to secure and increase Man's Happiness, when he first prevaricated with it, that *obliges* us indeed to him.

AND as our Happiness is complex with respect to both Parts of our Constitution, and in both Stages of its Duration ; what it misses in one, to be compensated in another ; *he* only can lay the *complete Motive*, and the lasting Obligation before us, to induce us *paramount* to all others, at all Times, and in all Places, to observe his Will. In doing that, we secure the divine Favour, which includes a Security of our Happiness in both Parts of our Nature, and in all its Faculties. And as the Commands of God are Directions and Qualifications for our Happiness, by connecting that Means to that End, what can possibly be wiser, or more prevailing upon a free Agent, than to affix that

CHAP. Sanction to the Command, as a Reward of the  
 XVI. Action, which is the ultimate End of it ; and  
 so bringing the End of the Action before the  
 Agent, direct his Choice, and *oblige*, and induce  
 him more powerfully to it ?

THE truest Method of investigating any Law  
 whatsoever is, first to enquire the End of the  
 Law, and then the Means of performing and  
 fulfilling it. What can animate Man more to  
 be chearful in doing all the Good he can to his  
 Fellow-Creatures, than the Consideration of the  
 greater Good he shall lay up and receive for so  
 doing ? And that the very Means of attaining  
 Happiness above, is the communicating Happi-  
 ness here below ? Or what can better reduce all  
 the selfish Affections, the Authors of so many  
 sublunary Mischiefs, into due Order and Subor-  
 dination to the *general* Good, than the Certainty  
 of losing a greater Interest hereafter for the sake  
 of attaining a less, and so much the less as be-  
 ing a repented, molested, or envied Good here ?  
 Universal Happiness is God's End and View in  
 the Creation and Redemption of the World ;  
 and as that Whole consists of so many Indivi-  
 duals, when every one pursues future Felicity by  
 the Means in his own Power, which are so many  
 providential Directions to every Man (that of  
 contributing to the Happiness of others, being  
 one amongst the rest) he concurs with God's  
 Design, and not only prays, but contributes to  
 his *Kingdom coming* daily to Perfection, *coming*  
 where it has not yet enter'd ; and where it has,  
*coming* daily to greater Perfection of Rule over us.

AND as he never reaps but where he has sown,  
 and according to what he has sown ; and has  
 made

made Virtue natural to our *Reason*, to our *Affect-CHAP.*  
*tion* to Society, and also to our Desires of Hap-  
 pinefs in this World, and the next : In exciting  
 to the Practice of it, he makes use of Motives  
 sometimes from one, sometimes from the other,  
 but all terminating in the Interest and Advantage  
 of the Agent here, and hereafter.

WHEN he address'es to Reason, he expostu-  
 lates with, and adjures that, to *consider* our Ways,  
*ponder* the Path of our Feet, whither they are  
 tending, and what will be the Consequence of  
 our Doings. *Consideration* being the actual open-  
 ing the *Eye* of the Mind within us ; earnestly  
 directing its Thoughts, which are its mental  
 Sight of the *Invisible*, yet incomparably more  
 importing Man, than all the visible Things that  
 surround him. Thus the *Faith* of *Abraham* in  
 his Life of religious Consideration *saw* the Day  
 of Christ, and was glad. He appeals to the Sen-  
 timents of Equity, Justice, Right and Wrong,  
 Good and Evil, which immediately and inti-  
 mately spring up in our Reason, upon the least  
 Consideration of Society and its several Rela-  
 tions, as an innate Law, as so many conscious  
 Maxims and known Truths previous to his Re-  
 velation, to try the Equity of his reveal'd Will,  
 and to compare and measure their own Ways by  
 the same. And as the End is intentionally  
 known before the Means, that gives *Conscience*  
 the Province of approving, or disapproving ; as  
 the Action has a Tendency to advance, or ob-  
 struct our Happiness. We have a Conscience or  
 Perception likewise wrought in us for publick  
 Good ; that *Total*, of which we make one, and  
 whose Interest, in most Respects, is one with  
 ours ; that gives the Sense of Honour or Praise,



CHAP. Shame or Reproach, as our Actions have benefited or prejudic'd, help'd or harm'd that.

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THAT Love to Society implanted in us, the great Patron and Protector of it would not have withdrawn, but still continued to our personal *Enemies*, because they are yet still of the same Society with us ; leaving the Vengeance or Redress of every tolerable Wrong, consistent with the Being of Society, to himself : That we ought to imitate the great Father of it, being in that like Children to their Father ; and, co-operating with his Providence, according to our Sphere, bestow our *general* Good, Kindness, and Benevolence, and not limit it, nor pass over the Opportunity he has given us, because the Object has been once an Enemy, lest a cancelled Obligation return upon us ; considering ourselves how much we receive from, and yet how often we offend God. And why are we commanded to *imitate* him, the Head of the Society, in that Particular, but because our Happiness in Society consists in, and is improved by it ? Thus the *Love of Enemies*, being one Branch and Particular of the universal Law of Benevolence, is the Law of our Nature, and the necessary redintegration of Society ; and therefore is so strictly enjoin'd, enforc'd, and inserted into daily Prayer by Christianity, which is the Perfection of every thing that is good in this World, and the next. And therefore the Deistical Ridicule of this Duty is a standing Monument against them, as well of the Shallowness of their Heads, as of the Badness of their Hearts, with respect to Society, and Human Nature. And why is that Publick good, the *Conversion of a Sinner*, such great Sinners against God and the Publick, *from*  
the

*the Error of their Ways*, so much recommended, CHAP. but for the sake of that increase of Happiness XVI. it brings to Society, and to the Converter?

IN doing good to others, the Example of *God* and *Christ* are proposed, and likewise the *laying up a good Foundation against the Time to come*, and *reaping plentifully*, that the Christian may be moved by one, or both of them, as he is disposed. Some Virtues and Duties are propos'd and press'd, sometimes upon a Temporal Advantage, at other times upon an Eternal. And so the Scripture becomes all Things to all Men, that it may gain some by all, as they are dispos'd to be gain'd by any, Means.

WHY are we bid to love God *with all our Heart, with all our Soul*, &c. but because that Love, as it adds nothing to God (did it add any Thing we should be superior to him) *re-acts* upon ourselves, by an Expansion of ourselves towards him in an Unity of Will; and, raising the Love of our own Happiness in him, throws off the false, and fixes the true Love of ourselves and our own Good, where it ought to be. That Love does not cast out the Love of ourselves, but encourages it as its Foundation; when it is perfect, it casteth out Fear; and so increases the Love more and more: And as we know it consults our Interest, we resign ourselves to him in a great Measure, without so much as thinking of that, in Confidence of his taking care of it.

BUT, when we have erred and strayed very much from him, nothing but a State of Danger,

CHAP. or the Consideration of the neglected Motives  
XVI. of Rewards and Punishments, which lay hold  
of the strongest Principle within us, SELF-PRESERVATION, can recover us: The general Excellency of Virtue, and the Turpitude of Vice are weak and incompetent Topicks in such a Case; but when the Eye of the Mind is open'd by Consideration, to see the several Ends they lead to; then the Excellency of the one, and Turpitude of the other, is sensibly and completely perceiv'd.

FOR what is the Excellency of Virtue; it must be excellent for something, and what is that, but as it is the best Accommodation and indispensable Provision for our Happiness in both Worlds? And what is the Turpitude of the other, but as it deceives and betrays us into Misery in both? And what is Folly but the Sense of a wrong Choice, and false Pursuit, for which we hate and loath ourselves into Repentance, and true Love of ourselves; for being so unwise as to love every Thing, and every Person better than self; for being so very thoughtless as to endeavour to monopolize Vice, by railing according to the common Mode, at the Practice of that in other People, which they pamper and indulge in themselves. What is Repentance but a Retraction of a wrong Choice of Happiness exchanged for a better? And what is Wisdom but the Sense of the Necessity of practising Virtue, and actually setting about it? Then we understand the Meaning of the Word *ought* to Fear, and serve God; when our Happiness, or Misery depend upon our Care, or Neglect in doing it. *For the Fear of the Lord is all Wisdom, and in all Wisdom is the performance of the Law,*  
and



ALL the Passions are subservient to the determin'd *Choice* of the Will ; being every one of them so many Modifications and Efforts of itself towards its Object, or its Good or Happiness (be it chose right and wisely, or wrong and foolishly) whether in the concupiscible, or irascible Kind. The *Greeks* rightly name it τὸ ἐγχεμονικόν or τὸ αὐτεξέσσιον. For it governs all the Powers of the Agent with an Imperial Authority ; they wait accordingly at its *Levee* and receive Orders, and change their Objects, as the other changes its Object, or its Notion of Happiness. The Election of the Will having fix'd its Object as its Good or Happiness, the Adhesion of that Faculty to that Object is its *Love*, and the Avoidance of the contrary Evil its Aversion or Hatred : And as that Adhesion of Will or Love of the Object is a King of our own chusing, no wonder we are so willing to obey its Laws. If the Good or Evil is present, Love and Hatred is modified into Complacency or Joy, or Grief and Anger : If future, into Desire and Hope, or Fear and Caution. So that the Person who loves any of the Things of this World supremely, has a different Happiness and a wrong Object of all his Passions, in respect to him who supremely loves God and Goodness ; which verifies that Maxim, *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* In the State of Innocence the Passions were subject to the Understanding or discerning Faculty of the Soul, but, upon Transgression and wrong Choice, went over to the Government of the Will or chusing Faculty of the Mind, and under



CHAP. der that Obedience have continued ever since.  
 XVI. Nor is there any possible Way of governing them to any Effect, or setting them to tolerable Rights, but by rectifying the Election of the other. For this reason *Love* is directed to abound more and more in Knowledge, and in all Judgment, that we may approve things that are excellent, that we may be sincere and without offence, Phil. i. 9, 10. When the right End is pitch'd upon, the Leader Love, and under that all the rest, fall into Order, and Subordination ; and then all the Commandments respecting God, or our Neighbour, are perceivably summ'd up and practis'd in the Love of each of them ; whilst the true Love of Self is the Foundation of them both.

As Love is the supreme governing Passion, nothing is, or ought to be its chief, most prefer'd, constantly adhered to Object, but what is its supreme *End*, viz. God, and Happiness in his Favour ; and if *Charity*, for the greater Enjoyment of our Neighbour, is the *End* of the Commandments respecting him, we perceive the Reason why Religion is summ'd up in the Love of God, and our Neighbour. And if all true Religion of the End respecting them consists in the *Love* of them, how devious and absurd is that modern Pretence to true Religion, which erects its System upon dry *Rationality* ; pure *Understanding*, and gazing *Admiration* ?

IF the End God has propos'd to our Action is the true End of our Action, and is the first Principle of a religious Conversation ; and all moral Actions are denominated from their End and Intention, more than their Effects and Events ;

Events ; it is an allow'd Maxim, that whatever is the first Principle in constituting a Thing, ought often to be recurr'd to, to keep it from deviating. Habits, being an Aggregate of many single Acts, are of the very self-same *moral* Species with the particular Acts which compound them. And when the *Love of Virtue* is put to the *Test*, what it is that in *reality* still feeds and supplies that Love, our Author is forc'd to own the Truth against his Conscience, and the whole Design of his Book. " 'Tis certain, says he, " on the other Side, that the Principle of *Fear* " of *future Punishment*, and *Hope of future Re-* " *ward*, how mercenary and servile soever it " may be accounted, is yet in many Circum- " stances a great Advantage, Security, and Sup- " port to Virtue \*."

WAS *Socrates's* Love of Virtue *mercenary* and *servile*, who is the best *Deist* upon Record, excepting *Job*. When the *genuine* Nature of the Love of Virtue is called in Question in Speculation, whether the Love of it is, *for its own sake*, or for the sake of *Benefit* and *future Reward* ; is there any possible Way of deciding it better, than recurring to a *Test* ; and that Test a Matter of Fact ? And did not both those great *Heroes* support themselves and their Virtue in their greatest Distress, upon the *future Prospect* of the *Favour* of God ? And as they lived, and loved Virtue upon that untraversible Principle of natural Religion, God is, and is a *Rewarder* of those that diligently seek him, in the Desire, and Sense of the want of Revelation, so they died in the Love of Virtue upon the same Principle.

\* *Charact*, Vol, II, pag, 60.

FOR they were *genuine* Deists according to Nature, living in the *Fear* of God, and therefore were *Realists* in their Respects to Virtue. But the *modern* Deists, who erect their System upon the Principles of this Author, may entitle themselves to any Name sooner than *true sound* Deists. They make mighty high Pretences to the Love of Virtue, upon the old *Stoical* Principle of being *its own Reward*, exclusive of the Fear or Favour of God ; and so are mere *Nominals* in the Love of it, and are like to be left in the lurch, as *Brutus* was, with the *Name* Virtue. For this Author, more exalted in his own Opinion, than in Title, derides the Fear of God as ridiculous *Cowardice*, and any Regard to his Rewards as no less ridiculous *Avarice* \*. The *Stoicks* stood to their Principle in their acutest Sufferings. But this Author shews himself Master neither of their Courage, nor their Consistency. For when his *as nominal* Virtue is put to the *Pinch*, then he calls in *Rewards*, *Rewards* to its Security and Support, at the same time he professedly derides the Belief of them. Is not this a great Inconsistency in his *moral* Architecture ? He neither builds in the *Stoick* Order and Proportion, nor in the *Socratick* ; but makes a Jumble of two Contrarieties to erect one *Whole*.

Is that moral System beautiful, or deform'd, which is destitute of an intelligent super-intending Power, whose head Business is to reward, and punish according to the Agent's Deportment ? Is that Building of that great *Connoisseur*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 129.

in Beauty, or the Admirers of it most to be ad-  
 mired at? The *Antinomian* Principle of serving  
 and pleasing God, after discarding any Obliga-  
 tion to his Laws and Commandments, is not  
 more absurd or fantastical. Besides, they who  
 make their Duty their Interest, and engage  
 themselves to Virtue, 'as God would have them,  
 for the Sake of the solid Reward he has annex-  
 ed, have all the ideal Charms of the Beauty of  
 Virtue, Honesty, moral Taste, as entire to en-  
 tertain them by the Way, as those Inamorato's  
 or *Don Quixot's* of abstracted Charms, who scorn  
 their supreme Interest in the Pursuit. And  
 therefore where such an *Interest* joins in the Pur-  
 suit of Things *lovely*, the Scent must be stronger,  
 and the Chase surer and brisker.

AND thus we rightly intend and pursue the  
 Good and Happiness of Ourselves, the Service  
 of God, and the Benefit of our Neighbour, in  
 one and the same Action. For God has made  
 our Duty and Interest, his Glory and our own  
 Good the same Thing; they are but different  
 Expressions importing the same Meaning. Man's  
 Happiness was the certain End of God, in  
 creating him; when that is intended, his *Glory*  
 is effectually intended, tho' unmentioned: When  
 an intended Work is accomplish'd, and the  
 Work-Master attains the End proposed from it,  
 he at the same Time attains all the Glory re-  
 sulting, or desired from it: And when the  
*Glory of God* is mention'd as the End of our Ac-  
 tions, what does that point to, but a due Care  
 over them, not to disappoint him of his End  
 in creating and preserving us? When mention'd  
 as the End of our Praise, what is that but ac-  
 knowledging to his Bounty the Receipt of our  
 Happiness?



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Happiness? So that if God seeks his own Glory, by communicating of his Goodness towards our Happiness, we can never otherwise seek his Glory, but by making his Methods effectual to our own Happiness in his rewarding Favour; at the same time we design our own true Happiness in all that we do, we design his Glory: *We eat, and drink, and should act in all other Things to our own Happiness, therefore are we bid to do the same to the Glory of God; and to glorify his Goodness by our Thanksgiving.* Wherein does the Glory of a Governor consist but in consulting the general Happiness of the Governed? If that is the Scope of his Power, and the Aim of his Authority, and God is our supreme Governor, *Good, or God* for that purpose, we can never think of our own, in concert with the general Happiness of Society here and hereafter, but we think of the Glory of God. The *Deists* therefore, who neither intend his Glory, nor their own future Happiness from his Rewards, in any thing they do, do violently and unnaturally remove the moral Actions of Men from the *Center* God has appointed to them.

No well-meaning Christian, who duly designs his own eternal Happiness, ought therefore to be disquieted; tho' I am afraid not a few have been put under false Fears, where no Fear was, lest they should be Hypocrites, because they don't feel in themselves that they love God, and Virtue enough *for their own Sake*, but unluckily happen to think at the same Time, of their own Advantage by it. That Expression *for their own Sake*, tho' very common, when it comes to be examin'd, is doubtless nothing more than a Stricture of Piety, and an exalted

alted Commendation of God and Virtue, and ought to be construed always, in this Life at least, with that Qualification. Tho' the Kingdom of Heaven consists of Righteousness, as being the Law of that Kingdom, yet that Law is admirable and amiable with respect to its happy Consequences upon the Subjects.

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FOR in a strict Intendment, *exclusive* of all Thoughts of our *own* Interest therein, it is, 1. With respect of God; *without Faith*, the Scripture tells us, *it is impossible to please him*; and what is that Faith, but as it follows, that he is, and is a *Rewarder* of those that diligently seek to please him? The true Notion therefore is not to pretend to love Virtue for its *own Sake*, but for *God's Sake*, i. e. to do good not for secular Ends and Expectations; but with intuition on his Command, who sees in secret whatever is intended to him, and will hereafter *reward openly* for it. 2. With respect to ourselves it is, in Fact, impracticable in this State of Things. But what is worse, a kind of setting up for Independency, or a scorning to be beholden, or acknowledge ourselves to be *what we are*, dependant needy Beings; an actual undervaluing of God's Rewards; preposterous and inconsiderate Arrogance in such indigent Creatures as we are, it is a false stating our own Case, and therefore must be a wrong Scheme.

Do we pretend to add any thing to God, by pretending to *love him for his own Sake*? Does he really stand in any need of our Love, or can we think it is requir'd of us on his own Account? If not, let us make Sense of it, and love him as heartily as ever we can, by keeping  
his

CHAP. his Commandments for *our* own Sake. For  
 XVI. we indeed stand in need of all the good  
 Effects of those ardent Streamings and Inclinations of the Mind towards the Author of our Felicity, as they return upon the Mind with Interest, add great Improvement to it, by refining it from the Love of this World, and fitting it for a better. The End of loving God is to be like him, and the End of that is our own Happiness.

OUR Love of God is not a giving, but an indigent *receiving* Love; we love him because he first loved us, a Love of Gratitude for his *relative*, munificent, and undeserved Kindnesses. What have we to give, but the little Nothing of our Thanks, which acknowledges our Dependance, his Fulness, and our Need of Receiving; and is so far acceptable to the generous Giver of all our Enjoyments, and of our Hopes of more? So that to pretend our Love of God in this Life ought to be so *simple, pure,* and *unmix'd*, as to have no other Object than merely *the Excellency of that Being itself*, in order to render it acceptable, or convince our own Minds of the Sincerity of our Love towards him, is indeed to make our Love *unacceptable* to him, to convict ourselves of *Hypocrisy* before him, and of being *Flatterers* in Love, and *Sycophants* in Devotion.

BUT the more *dependant* we make ourselves on him in acknowledging the Receipts of all that we have in this Life, of the Means of Grace, and the Hope of Glory in the next, then our Love and Devotion respecting him as what he is to *us*, our *Benefactor* in these Things, is truly  
*grateful*

grateful and becoming us; and therefore grateful and acceptable to him. And the offering such Love must appear to the Heart and Conscience to be perfectly *sincere* and dutiful in such Creatures as we are; because it proceeds from the *Sense* of our Dependancy, as being his *Creatures*, recipient and expectant of all our Good. If our Author admits the *Thought* of *Self-Happiness* and *Fruition* \* or *Gratitude* † into the Love of God, then he admits *Self-Interest*; then he excludes *pure Esteem*, *Excellency*, and *own Sake*: And therefore can be no *Apology* for that Principle.

It is ridiculous in him to alledge there, in order to remove *Mercenarinefs* out of Religion, and make it *liberal*: “How shall one deny  
“that to serve God by *Compulsion*, or for *Interest* merely, is *servile* and *mercenary*?” For who that considers either the Nature of God or Man, can grant it *mercenary* to serve him in the Way he himself requires, and from the Motives all his true Servants recorded in Scripture have *actually* serv’d him? Was *their* Religion *servile* and *illiberal*? Does the greatest Wisdom we are capable of in declining the greatest Evils that can befall us, deserve the Name of *Compulsion*? Or to pursue the greatest Happiness of our Nature, is that a reproachful *Interest*? He reproaches only himself and his own System, by adding in the next Page, “That altho’ this  
“Service of *Fear* be allow’d ever so low or  
“base; yet *Religion* still being a *Discipline* and  
“Progress of the Soul towards Perfection, the  
“Motive of Reward and Punishment is *Pri-*

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 270.

† *Ibid.* pag. 272.

“ *many*



CHAP. “ *māry* and of the highest Moment with us;  
 XVI. “ till being capable of more sublime Instruc-  
 ~~~~~ “ tion, we are led from this *servile* State to  
 “ the generous Service of *Affection* and *Love*? ”
 If the Motive is *Primary* in serving God in this
 World, why does he presently after in the
 Margin inconsistently make it only *Supple-*
mental?

BESIDES, it is a more liberal, and less mercenary Morality, by Faith and Hope to expect the Reward of Happiness, from the interposing Distribution and Allotment of our Heavenly Governor, fulfilling his general Promise, than to depend upon and be wholly influenced by a Stoical Notion of rewarding Happiness, as necessarily and inseparably connected to Virtue by a blind Fatality. Necessity and Fate would, in that Case, preside and be the only Deity, and there would be no longer room for Faith, or Hope, or Prayer, which helps to qualify the Soul with virtuous Dispositions; at the same time it resigns up itself in Submission to all the Disposals of Providence in this World; but any Regard to the heavenly Will, or his Discrimination in the next Life, would become useless, upon that Supposition. If Love consists in an Union of Mind and Interest, Inclinations and Designs, we must forego our own mistaken ones, and, by Imitation, unite ourselves to those of God; and the Proof of that Progress in uniting ourselves by Love to him, is keeping his Commandments; which are Prescriptions, as well for our unlearning Evil, as learning Good, and correcting the false Love of Self into that which is good and true and divine, by copying after God in so many Attitudes of Like-
 ness

ness and Similitude. . So that *we love God because* CHAP.
he first loved us, in first making Man in his XVI.
 own Image; and when he had unmade himself,
 by Transgression, making him over again as it
 were, by sending his Son in the Likeness of
 Man.

WHAT makes the Happiness of God, makes
 also ours, by Imitation and Communication.
 When the Love of him perfects us in the Imita-
 tion of liking, desiring, and pursuing the same
 Things and Views with him, it gives us Posses-
 sion of him, makes us partake of his Happiness,
 and derives it upon ourselves. The more we
 know and consider God and his Ways, the more we
 love, the more we imitate, the more we are like
 him. And his Perfections of *Holiness, Justice,*
Mercy, &c. are the Exemplars of all Virtue,
 the Patterns of our Imitation, the Objects of
 our Love, and the Source that communicates
 Happiness to us. And as that future Fruition
 consists in delighting in God, being like him,
 and receiving of his Abundance in proportion
 to the Increase of our Likeness, we must carry
 Oil in the Lamp with us; for there is none to
 be borrow'd, or bought at the unexpected
 Hour; but we must be previously fitted with
 some Likeness and Qualification, in order to be
 changed into and invested with more glorious
 Likeness; and if we don't learn to love God in
 this World, where we go to School to learn it,
 we shall have no Notion of it hereafter, and so
 be destitute of all Qualification for Happiness in
 his Presence. So that all our Love for him
 here, is for the sake of being happy with him
 for evermore.

Is it culpable? Is it not rather commendable for a Traveller to think of his Journey's End; or a Stranger of his Home? This was certainly the *Vialicum*, or Provision in the Way, of the old Heroes of Faith in their Road to Heaven, insomuch that one of the *Greek* Commentators affirms, that the Thoughts of *returning home*, and *being Strangers or Sojourners in this World*, is the first Virtue, and every Virtue in this World*. These Candidates for Heaven, and wise Oeconomists of Happiness, having no express Revelation of the Gospel, but as it served to shew their Faith, that a heavenly Country was to be preferred to an earthly, wisely follow'd the Dictates of Nature in preferring a greater Good to a less, and a less Evil to a greater, in Virtue of the Promise of God to Adam, and afterwards renew'd to Abraham.

BUT the noble Author last cited deviates from Nature, in order to attain his malevolent Ends against Revelation, (in Opposition to which he seems to have had the most *unnatural* Prejudices) by a general Law and Principle of his System of Virtue, he discards the Consideration of *private Good*, or *Self-Affection*, from having any Share in it; discards also the natural Dictates of common Prudence and Conscience, for preferring the greater to the less private Good; and depreciates the Virtue built upon that Principle of common Sense, and Nature, under the Notion of a *Bargain*. His Words are,

* Ἡ πρώτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ τὸ ξένον εἶναι τῷ κόσμῳ τέτυκται. *Chryst. Heb. xi. 13.* And I may add, tho' they were Strangers in this World, they were intimately known to and acquainted with the *Maker* of it.

“ Now the more there is of this violent
“ Affection towards *private Good*, the less Room
“ is there for the other sort [Affection] towards
“ *Goodness itself*, or any good and deserving Ob-
“ ject, worthy of Love and Admiration for its
“ own sake; such as God is universally ac-
“ knowledg’d.”——And afterwards speaking of
“ *Resignation* to his Will, that there is “ no more
“ Worth or Virtue [in such an Instance] than
“ in any other *Bargain of Interest*: The Meaning
“ of his Resignation being only this, *That he*
“ *resigns his present Life and Pleasures conditio-*
“ *nally, for that which he himself confesses to be*
“ *beyond an Equivalent; eternal Living in a State*
“ *of highest Pleasure and Enjoyment* *.”

AND elsewhere, “ I know too, that the
“ mere Vulgar of Mankind often stand in need
“ of such a rectifying Object as the *Gallows* be-
“ fore their Eyes. Yet I have no Belief that
“ any Man of a *liberal Education*, or common
“ *Honesty*, ever needed to have Recourse to this
“ Idea in his Mind, the better to restrain him
“ from playing the Knave. And if a *Saint* had
“ had no other Virtue than what was rais’d in
“ him by the same Object of Reward and
“ Punishment, in a more *distant State*; I know
“ not whose Love or Esteem he might gain be-
“ sides: But for my own part, I should never
“ think him worthy of mine †.” He adds in
the next Page, “ Nothing is ridiculous but what
“ is *deform’d*: Nor is any thing Proof against
“ Raillery except what is *handsome and just*.”
And presently after, “ Nothing so successful to

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 59. † *Ibid.* Vol. I. pag. 127.

CHAP. " be play'd upon, as the Passions of *Cowardice*
 XVI. " and *Avarice*."

Is this his Ridicule of *Christian* Virtue? The *Ridicule* recoils and fixes only upon himself; according to his own Maxim, *the Ridicule, if ill placed at first, will certainly fall at last where it deserves* *. And that is true enough, according to the old Maxim, *Risu inepto nihil ineptius*. Seeing then he ridicules the Instincts and Operations of *Nature* and *common* Sense, and the Influence of all Laws human and divine, in order to ridicule Christianity; I ask his Admirers, where does the Ridicule fall? I would not have it fall, if it could be help'd, upon them, or their ador'd Author; because in Truth, the Matter is too serious for such Levity.

How in Fact is that *common* *Honesty*, which supersedes the Fear of the *Gallows*, first *educated* in Subjects, but from the *religious* Principle of the superior *Fear* of *God*, to whom they must give an Account of their Actions? If that had its due Effect upon all Persons, there would be no need of Civil Laws with *such* Sanctions: For the Law is not made for the *Righteous*, who maintain their Character upon that Principle; but for the *Unrighteous*, and *Disobedient*, who degenerate from it; as *Indictments* for the Breach of the Law supposes, and arraigns the Criminal first and foremost for *not having* the Fear of *God* before his Eyes. If all the Laws Divine and Human suppose the *Degeneracy* of human Nature, and are grounded on it; and the heavenly Legislature, and likewise the earthly, shew

* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 10.

their

their Wisdom in providing Remedies and Helps against it, and annexing Sanctions to their respective Laws, which give them all their Efficacy; is the Degeneracy of human Nature, to be ridiculed as a Phantom, a Thing confess'd and felt by all the wise Men in the World? And are the Laws of God and Man to be banter'd and laugh'd at? For to ridicule the Sanctions, without which the Laws are but Cobwebs, is a direct, unavoidable Ridicule upon the Laws of both. A decent Laugh indeed!

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IT is true, *Epicurus* of old, and *Hobbs* of late, maintain'd the Principle of *Self-Affection* and *private* Good; but it was in the *depraved* Sense, and vicious Extreme; *Self* was *all in all* with them. They excluded Benevolence, Providence, and all *Conscience* towards *God* or *Man* out of their Scheme: And so the Passion for *Self* having no *inward* Sense of *God*, nor of the Publick to regulate it in the Heart, whence it springs, becomes *Atheism* and the worst of Evils in Society. But with that Regulation and Reference constantly guiding and directing it, it moves in Sphere, and does all Duty to *God*, and *Man*. Accordingly *Socrates*, and *Epictetus*, the most eminent upon Heathen Record, as well for the Practice, as the Knowledge of moral Virtue, both espoused this Principle under the same Regulation; and conducted their Actions by the Expectation of the Favour of *God*, and his Rewards for well-doing. But this *Visionary* in Virtue and Reformation having made a great Discovery of the *Poet's* Meaning of *Sensus Communis* *, that it signifies *Publick Sense*; or Affec-

* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 103:

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tion, makes that his first and only Principle of Virtue ; and, at once, expels Regard to *Self*, to *God*, to any of his *Rewards* or *Punishments*, out of his System ; at least from having any rightful Share in *his* Virtue ; save only by the by at a dead Pinch future Rewards and Punishments are allow'd to show their Heads. For he profess'dly ridicules the having Respect to God's Rewards and Punishments as *Avarice*, and *Cowardice*, as above observed.

Skin for Skin and all that a Man bath will be give for his Life ; tho' it came from a wiser and more virtuous Deist, and a far better Philosopher than his Disciples can pretend our Author to have been, he rallies it * nevertheless as Heterodox Sophistry, as if it was unnatural. What is *natural* in the Consultations of every Agent is too filthy to mix with his pure Virtue ; that being a Composition of an *Ideal*, *Transcendental* Notion opposed to *Self*. Yet the Truth forces the Confession from him, that it is the Height of Wisdom, no doubt, to be *rightly Selfish* †.

WHY is Truth so strong and prevailing but because it is Nature ? And why is *Self-Preservation* the strongest Principle within us, but because it is the same Nature ? As long as that Principle subsists, and is influenced by a due Regard to him who is our *Preserver*, the Juggle and Fascination of his pretended Virtue must vanish before it ; as being in *Reality* nothing better than the Nature, and the Self-moving Principle of Man *inverted*.—Is that *beautiful*, or is it deform'd, which delineates real Life, and Nature

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 123.


† *Ibid.* pag. 21.

in an inverted Order? It may carry a great Sound with it, as many other Cheats do, which pretend the *Good of the Publick* and nothing else; but it is the Sound of Words and nothing more that captivates the Admirers; because in fact and sober Sense, it is impracticable by the Generality; and I wish that was not the Author's real Policy, to set up Virtue upon a Principle plausible (in false Theory) but in good Truth equivalent to being impracticable; which, under the *Name*, effectually banishes the *Thing* Virtue out of the World.

If such a *School* of Virtue, set up in Contradiction to *real practising* Nature, is a *moral Deformity*, then according to our Author's own Distinction, that such is the *true Object* of Ridicule, how can his System escape it? If it is neither *handsome* nor *just* to establish an impracticable Foundation of Virtue, how can it be Proof against that Raillery he would set on Foot? especially when the Laughing Faculty is generally most lavish against your *Impostors* and *Pretenders* to Things against the real Powers, and known Movements of Nature. The Paramount of all Ridicule upon Record is, *Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.*—— But if he digs a Pit for others, and falls into it himself, who will pity him, or help laughing? For a *Bull* in Sense is certainly to all Men of Sense an awkward ridiculous *Beau* in fine Words!

WHENCE that Expression, * *I would not be guilty of such a Thing for the whole World?* Not from his *speculative* Publick-Sense, but *common Sense*, in the obvious Meaning, habitually taught

* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 133.

CHAP. and inculcated in *Christendom* from that Maxim
 XVI. of Profit and Loss, whose Author was *Christ*, *If*
 *a Man should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul.*—— If the Followers of this great Lover of Paradox, more than of Virtue, will vouchsafe to shew common Sense in practising upon that divine Maxim, we are agreed.

EPICURUS, *Hobbs*, *Spinosa*, and almost all the eminent *Atheists* and *Fatalists*, are recorded as passionate Admirers and Extollers of Virtue *for its own Sake*, not for the Hope of any Reward after Death, but for the *Excellence of Virtue itself*, and the Advantage the Followers of it receive in this Life ; which evinces, that it has been a general Combination to attack and subvert Religion, under these false Colours ; that the Pretences to this *aerial* Love of Virtue commonly run the highest where the Life of *real* Morality and Religion is made a Victim, and lies bleeding and dying at their Feet : And that the owning or disowning the Being of a God amounts to one and the same Irreligion, wherever a future Judgment, the Influences of those Rewards and Punishments (the Sinews of his Laws, and Instruments of his Government) are denied or derided, and Duty and Obligation thrown off the Hinges : the Consequences, which naturally follow, are very plain ; The Worship of God is *Enthusiasm* ; Christianity an *Imposture* ; and Heaven and Hell a *Sweetmeat*, or *Rod* for *Children* to take their Physick †. They ought to have no Influence upon Virtue according to him, for he says a Man can be Good and Virtuous in *no* Degree till he likes and affects Good-

† An Expression of the Author of *Charact.* Vol. II. p. 247.

ness and Virtue *for its own Sake*, and as amiable CHAP. XVI.
in itself ||. The Truth forces itself upon him a little after, and he finds himself under a Necessity to own 'tis certain on the other Side, that the Principle of "*Fear of future Punishment*" and *Hope of future Reward*, how mercenary "and servile soever it may be accounted, is yet, "in many Circumstances, a great Advantage and "Support to *Virtue* †." What is this but advancing a notional Principle, for subverting the Virtue of Christendom, under a whimsical Distinction?

Now according to the Observation of the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* *That every Exception to a general Rule is founded upon a general Rule itself*; the above Exception, which he allows of, must certainly be acknowledg'd the truest, first, superior general Rule; being so evidently founded in *Nature* and the *Truth of Things*; consequently, that his Doctrine of Virtue must be excepted out of it, as an *Extravagance* and a Rant of *Enthusiasm*, being grounded in an *unnatural* Endeavour to put asunder what God and Nature have join'd together. Had he first made a due Inquiry into Nature, he had made a better *Inquiry concerning Virtue*. For that which makes Virtue *impracticable* to the *Generality*, according to the Measures of Man in his present State, can never be the Way to serve Virtue, or recommend it, in *good earnest*, to Practice.

WHAT truer, and yet what worse Character can be given of the *Deists* Religion, who reject Christianity, than that it is apparently bottom'd

|| *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 66.

† *Ibid.* Vol. I. pag. 10.

CHAP. upon *Ignorance*, or *Mistakes*, both of the *Nature*
 XVI. of *Man*, and *God*? And that *they* fight against
 true Religion (the invincible Gospel) in the *War*
 of *Ignorance*; as it is elegantly express'd, *Wisd.*
 xiv. 22. Their *Blunders* about the *Goodness* of
 God have been shewn before, and shewn to be
 their *Sheet Anchor*. And as to the *Nature* of
 Man, is it not absurd to go about to *stifle*, so
 inhumanly *stifle* those Springs of Action in hu-
 man Nature; and so unnaturally *baffle* those De-
 sires of Reward, which natural Religion inspires;
God is, and is also a *Rewarder* of those that dili-
 gently seek him.

AND out of Spite to the Christian Revelation,
 which has made those Rewards so bright and
 glorious, and attainable upon the most rea-
 sonable Easiness, is it not monstrous in *their*
 Leaders to set up an unnatural Dominion of Ir-
 religion over their wretched Votaries, by dis-
 couraging the most effectual Principles and Mo-
 tives to Virtue? Does not Christianity cherish,
 cultivate, water those *natural* Seeds of Virtue,
 and push them to Growth and Increase by the
 Prospect of the most *glorious Harvest*? Does it
 not hold out a Crown of Reward, more pre-
 cious and ponderous than all the Crowns of this
 World, to the Faith of the *true* Followers of
 Nature and of God? For every one who truly
 and diligently does so, embraces and super-adds
Christ; who came to reveal God, and Nature.
 The Sources of the divine Goodness, and Per-
 fections, no otherwise discoverable, yet, being
 discovered, are found perfectly suitable, and en-
 gaging to our rational Faculties. Nor is there
 any true System, either of the Nature of God,
 or Man, in his present degenerate State, but in
 his

his most wise and merciful Government over us, CHAP. XVI.
 by the Mediator *Christ Jesus*. And does not this judicious Observance of Nature demonstrate the Author of Christianity to be the undoubted Author of Nature? Whereas they must make Converts to the *Ignorance of God, and Man, and Nature*, before they can make Profelytes to their *Deism*.

IN short, as at the Beginning, *Jesus*, and the *Resurrection*, and his *Judging* the World in Righteousness, those fundamental Reasons for Repentance, were receiv'd as *babbling* by the *Epicureans*, and *Stoicks*, who of all the Sects of Philosophers were most contrary to Christianity; so a *modern Deist* seems to be an unhappy Composition of both of them, and therefore nourishes a double Spite against that Religion. In contradiction to the better Sentiments of *Socrates*, he maintains with the *Stoick*, the *Self-sufficiency* of Man to all Virtue; and that Virtue *is its own self-sufficient Reward*; he flights the Reviviscence of his *Body*, as a Return to Prison, rather than to an original constituent Part of himself; and therefore with the *Epicurean* indulges its Gratification, and makes the most of its short Continuance, as an essential Ingredient of his Happiness *: And both Sects join in him, in laying aside the principal Care of divine Providence, by disannulling his special Concern, to *reward* the Righteous, and *punish* the Wicked (the best Thing worth the Concern of superintending Pro-

* See *Christianity as old*, pag. 14. where the Author makes one *End* of regulating the Appetites, the conducing the more to the *Pleasure* of the Senses, as one *Constituent* of Man's Happiness, which very well agrees with the History of *Epicurus*.

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vidence) by the Hands of an *appointed Judge*, in the most distinguishing, distributive, conspicuous, and everlasting Manner before all moral Agents. And consequently, his Ill-will to Christianity carries a double Opposition and Resistance to a *Jesus* or *Saviour*; to a *Resurrection*; and to his *Judging* and *Distributing* future Rewards and Punishments. Yet, bating the Resurrection of the *Body*, and the *Person* to judge, *Socrates* could have inform'd him, all their Sentiments are contrary to the Truth and Nature of Things, tho' he should not condescend to be persuaded by *Christ* and his *Apostles*. I am afraid he believes with the *Stoick*, that all Sins are equal, because he makes so light of disbelieving the Gospel.

Who would imagine, yet so it is, that so fine a *Genius*, at ridiculing Christianity under the Name of *Enthusiasm*, should run into *real Enthusiasm* and *Knight-Errantry* himself, in order to explode it? For the same dazzling *Ideal* Notion of Virtue, which led him to contradict, and be very polite in Bombast †, overshooting the Powers

† By *Bombast* I mean, that Excess in Language, or Discord in Sentiment opposite to the *true* Sublime; which owes its Beauty and Grandeur to the expressing Things in Conformity to the *Nature* of Things. Consequently there may be a *false* Sublime in Words of the purest Diction, agreeable and charming enough to those who don't understand the Truth and Harmony of Things, whilst they are affected with the superficial Harmony of Sounds and Fiddles, Words and Periods. Cujuscunque orationem videris sollicitam et politam, scito animum quoque non minus esse pusillis occupatum. Magnus ille remissius loquitur et securius: quæcunque dicit, plus habent fiduciæ quam curæ—Oratio vultus animi est: si circumtonsa est, et fucata et manufacta, ostendit illum quoque non esse *sincerum*, & habere aliquid *fracti*. Sen. Ep. 115. The jejuneness of his Reasoning withers the Verdure of his Expressions,

Powers of Nature and Practice, has also led many *Quietists* ||, *Mysticks*, and *pretended Saints* of the *Romish Church*, which sets up its Throne upon the plain Abuse of Nature and Christianity, into the like Enthusiastick Extravagancies, Flight and Fancy, and Tokens of Want of Judgment. They would not *touch*, no not they, any of God's *Rewards*, no not with a Pair of Tongs; they would willingly, great Souls! *annihilate* themselves, and their Happiness, before the Image of Virtue they have set up in their own Fancy; and be contented to damn themselves eternally for the sake of the passionate Love they have for God.—But when you hear such Extravagancies, always beware of Cheats, Im-

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Expressions, and his Departure from Truth and Nature turns every Shew of Sublime into real Bombast. For as Truth duly represented according to the Nature of Things is the most splendid, magnificent, and affecting of all Things, so polished Words in rounded Periods deviating from the Nature of Things, are no better than a genteel Imposture with respect to right good Sense, an artful Quackish Deception as to Truth, and a Whorish Paint laid upon Nature by a good Hand. A false irreligious Thought cover'd over with pretty sweet Words, is Poison in a Sugar-Plumb: But I hope Religion is not like *Italian Songs*, where the worst Meaning of Words tuned with fine Sounds makes the best Musick.

|| “ *Contemplative Persons ought to divest themselves of all Affections to all things: They ought to reject and despise all God's Gifts and Favours, and to strip themselves of all Inclinations even for Virtue itself.*” Letter from Rome concerning the *Quietists*, pag. 85.

Another of their Tenets is, “ *True Contemplation must keep itself fix'd only to the Essence of God, without reflecting either on his Persons or his Attributes. And an Act of Faith thus conceiv'd, is more perfect and meritorious, than that which considers God with the Divine Attributes, or with the Persons of the Trinity in it,*” pag. 74. Behold a manifest Strain of refined secret Deism, harmonizing in their high Flight, with open *modern Deism*!

postors;

CHAP. postors, and Jugglers in Virtue; and the Love
XVI. of God. For

EVERY *sober-minded* wise Christian will be sure to shew their Wisdom in regarding their highest Interest above all Things; and conduct their whole Behaviour by that View. Because indeed a due Regard to the Rewards and Punishments of another Life, as brought to Light and administered by *Christ*, have a sober, true, practical Tendency for promoting the doing Good, incomparably beyond any *Deistical* Scheme. And therefore that *Distinction* which the said Author would set up between *Virtue* and *Religion**, as if the former was most commonly *diminish'd* and cramped by the latter, couches under it a scandalous, false Reflection upon the *Christian Religion*.

As to that *Narrowness of Spirit* which he pretends is peculiarly observable in the devout Persons, and Zealots of almost every religious Persuasion †. And again, “ If by the Height of devout Ex-
“ tasy and Contemplation, we are rather dis-
“ abled in this Respect, and render’d more un-
“ apt to the real Duties and Offices of Civil
“ Life, it may be said that *Religion* indeed is
“ then *too strong* in us ‖.” *Christianity* has nothing to answer for, with respect to such Persons, who neither practise nor understand it; instead of its being *too strong* in such Persons, it is really *too weak*; it only saunters, acts the Child, not the Man; for it does not act and operate in such weak, *mistaken* Minds according to the

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 5, 6, 58, 88.
58, 116.

‖ *Ibid.* pag. 88.

† *Ibid.* pag.

many Principles, Precepts, and Examples of *doing good* inculcated by that Religion ; no Defect of which can be laid to its Charge by its greatest Enemies. The true Enthusiast actuates and manages Religion according to his roving Fancy, but is not himself actuated or managed by it, in its true Design. Is any Servant asham'd of his Wages ? Or does he commonly do his Work the worse for having Assurance of receiving them ? Are not all Men, from the greatest to the least, Servants unto God ? The Service is unprofitable to the Master ; but the Wages is the making of the Servant : To serve God is to serve ourselves, and the Happiness he made us for. Sir *Isaac Newton*, Princip. pag. 527, says the Word *God* is a relative Term and has reference to *Servants*.

AND if this is the Conclusion and Sum of his best Apology for his chymical System of Virtue, he had better said nothing : “ That by building a future State on the Ruins of *Virtue*, Religion in general, and the Cause of a *Deity* is betray'd ; and by making Rewards and Punishments the principal Motives to Duty, the Christian Religion in particular is overthrown, and its greatest Principle, that of *Love*, rejected and exposed *.” For he quite mistakes the Case ; the Practice of Virtue upon the Motive of Reward and Punishment in a future State, is the *Foundation* of Happiness in that State. How then can the Practice of Virtue be the *Ruin* of it ? It establishes the Religion and Worship of the *Deity* upon the Bottom God himself has built it on ; which Way then is Re-

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 279.

CHAP. religion in general and the Cause of a Deity betrayed? And if *Christ* is the *Distributor* of the future Rewards and Punishments, and has improved all the Virtues, and the Worship of God by new Means superadded to make all effectual; how is his Religion overthrown? Or in what manner is its greatest Principle, the Love of *God* and *Christ*, rejected or exposed; when the whole Service of Christianity is a *grateful* Acknowledgment of *that most surprizing Love* in the Benefits receiv'd, and to be receiv'd?

BUT is it not extremely surprizing and inconsistent in this high-spirited Author, who pretends to be such a passionate Admirer of *disinterested* Love, Friendship, Virtue; if he of all Men, should appear an Enemy to *that* Religion, and *that* Love, and to Christianity upon *their* account; seeing nothing is more apparent, than that the least interested, most generous Virtue, most captivating Love, most heroick Friendship, that ever yet reach'd the Ears of Mortals, enlivens every Page, and inspires the whole System? Could he possibly have been *sincere* in his own *Principle*, and at the same Time forbear to love, adore, and become a Disciple to the *Mediator* of that Religion; if not for his Benefits conferr'd, at least out of *Esteem* of the transcendent *Excellency* of his Actions and Compassions? To scorn to be beholden to his Maker for the Hope of his Rewards or his Assistance in Virtue, is *more* than human! And therefore his aspiring to a Sphere above *mortal* Capacity, and alluring Disciples after him, brings him down to a *Pedant* in Virtue and *Humanity*. His moral Beauty, and his pretended Love of it, are both mis-shapen! his System a *Sham*, and a mean

mean Artifice to overturn the best Religion in CHAP.
the World. XVI.

BESIDES, the *Religion* I am speaking of includes *his Virtue* and more ; and therefore can't in itself be *narrower* than that. It teaches to work out our own Happiness in both Worlds in dependance upon God's Favour through the *Mediator* ; which includes the *whole* of our Happiness in all our Faculties, of Body, and Soul ; consequently larger than *Virtue* in *his* Sense, which he makes to consist in *Affection* to *earthly Society* ; and allows it to *Atheists*, as well as *Deists* ; but not in so perfect a Degree *. As Christianity finds us a Man, it will make us a Man ; our *Nature* and Constitution now will be our Nature and Constitution hereafter, only greatly improved in both its Parts : So exactly does Christianity consult *Nature* and improve it.

WHEREAS the *Deist* consigns his *Body* in the Grave to everlasting Oblivion ; spurning the said Religion, he spurns all Belief of its *Resurrection* ; drops half human Nature, and leaves it in the lurch for any Revivification or Happiness ; and so betrays its Cause, in *Futurity*, in the *earnest Expectation of the Creature*, and loses it before all the World. Such wretched Consulters are they of *our common Nature*, and worse Counsellors of its joint *Happiness* ! They join the Opposers of Christianity from the beginning, in professing to deride this Article of future Hu-

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 6, 57, 69. And this Virtue he confines to *Honesty*, and distinguishes it likewise from *Religion* in his *Essay* on Wit and Humour, pag. 93.

CHAP. man Happiness, as a *Hope more becoming Worms*
 XVI. *than Men*, in the Phrase of *Celsus* †.

FOR tho' it is *natural* in us to have Affection to Society, as this Author pleads ||, can he deny it to be likewise *natural* in us to have Affection for *Ourselves* ; and that Affection susceptible of the Influence of Rewards and Punishments from our *Maker*, as our greatest Concernment, as our highest Reason, as our Religion for loving our Neighbour, and doing all the Duties to Society ; to the Neediest ; to Posterity, who can't requite us ? Yet so unconscionable is he to God and Human Nature, as, the better to expel all Regard to God as a Governor and Rewarder, he tramples upon this *chief* Aspect and Consideration of *Nature* that is in every Agent ; and upon the *other* Sense of Natural, sets up his *stalking Horse* of Virtue, to secure his Game of killing *Religion* dead.

LET Men think, as free of Prejudice as they please, upon all Matters ; but it will be a Shame and Reproach, if their actual Free-thinking is nothing more than *Half-thinking*, upon the *Nature of a moral Agent*, and the true Reasons and Motives of Virtue, in *real* Life and Action. I shall therefore apply the Words of this Author to himself, because they so exactly fit him, as he has degraded the *Nobility of Authorship*, by departing so shamefully from *Nature* : “ *His*
 “ *Piece will be found ridiculous, when it comes*
 “ *thoroughly to be examin'd. For Nature will not*
 “ *be mock'd. The Prepossession against her can*

† Σκολήκων ἢ ἐλπίς, Orig. cont. 240.
 Vol. III. pag. 214.

|| Charact.

“ never

“ never be very lasting. Her Decrees and In-
 “ stincts are powerful ; and her Sentiments in-
 “ bred. She has a strong Party abroad ; and as
 “ strong a one within ourselves : And when any
 “ Slight is put upon her, she can soon turn the Re-
 “ proach, and make large Reprisals on the Taste
 “ and Judgment of her Antagonist *.” To which
 I add the Observation of Lord Bacon, “ A lit-
 “ tle Philosophy helps to make an *Albeist*, but
 “ a great deal brings round to *Religion*.” And
 it has been truly observed, that the *Deists* are
 so superficial in solid Learning, that was it not
 to prevent the Ignorant from being seduced by
 their superficial Writings, they would be the
 Contempt of all learned and judicious Chri-
 stians.

BUT Christianity insures the *Resurrection* of the
Body, which is that *peculiar* Life and Immorta-
 lity to both Parts of our Nature, brought to
 Light by the Gospel ; which eternal Life is the
 Gift of God, thro’ the *Mediator* ; who has the
 Gift put into his own Hands, to distribute to
 the World. So very proper is it for him to
 have the final Allotment of the *Ends*, Happiness
 and Misery, who is the Head of all the appoint-
 ed *Means*, and the Author of eternal Salvation.
 And as *eternal Life* is at his Disposal, and attain-
 able only upon the Conditions of *his* Gospel ;
 not the natural Consequence of following mere
 Reason for a Guide ; but a bountiful and gra-
 tuitous *Superaddition*, as I have made appear be-
 fore, where’s the *Deist*’s Provision for *eternal*
Life ?

* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 334.

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A WISE *Bargain*, truly, to lose the *total* Happiness of his Nature in both its Parts ! For if Death, as he owns, is not a Ceasing to be, but a Separation of Soul and Body ; and the Reunion of them to a State of Blessedness is that Immortality and eternal Life, which is the Gift of God to the Faithful in Christ, exclusive of all the Despisers of the Gospel ; where are his Pretences to *that* Life of Body and Soul ? His Fate, as a Despiser, is to perish from all Enjoyments ; and therefore will find his Resurrection to Condemnation of Body and Soul ; which, being void of all Happiness, has not the Name of *Life* ; nor is it privileg'd with the Cessation of the being of either of them ; but a Reunion for ever to suffer the Indignation of God, upon both, for evermore, suffering as they sinn'd together. His vile Body will be rais'd by the Power of him he so much contemns, and chang'd, not into a glorious, but viler Body, and join'd to his infidel Soul, to believe too late, and be buffeted and vilified for an obstinate Fool, to all Eternity, for despising his Truth, contemning his Revelation, and his coming to Judgment. So little Occasion had he to distinguish between the *Atheist* and *Deist*, seeing their End is like to be the same.

AND why should not their End be the same, since their Virtues are the same ? For a Sinner to pretend in *his own Sufficiency* to approach God, is the same as to disown him *to be what he is* ; or a Sinner to be a *Sinner*. Neither of them allow of any *positive Account* hereafter, and in that Respect they are equal. And what signifies allowing Virtue here in *Name*, and God as an Inspector

spector in *Name*, or an Example of Benevolence in *Name*? When they believe no *solemn* Account to be given, or that they shall suffer any thing in *Judgment* from him. Is it so? then there is no Deficiency in *Atheism* from *Deism*, except the *Example* of the Deity; but all the Use the *Deists* pretend to make of that, is for Benevolence to Society in this Life; and now if this Author allows the Practice of Benevolence and all the human Virtues to the *Atheist* in the Places above cited, he makes the Example useless, and, by his own Concession, ought to have own'd *him* upon Equality as to that also.

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MR. *Bayle* proves the *Atheist* capable of *their* Benevolence and human Virtues in various Places of his Dictionary, from the Temper of some, Education of others, Love of Fame, Sense of Dishonour, Rewards and Punishments of the Magistrate, or some Temporal Advantage; not from the Instinct of Conscience, not upon *religious* Principles, to be sure. And if the *Atheist* may be virtuous not upon a *religious* Principle; then the Virtues of the *Atheist* and *Deist* are the same, the Principle being the same: Neither of them admitting, nor practising upon the Religion or Principle of being *accountable to God*. Our Author indeed represents the *Atheist* more splenetick, and out of Humour, on Account of Disorders in the System of the World; and that is all the real Distinction I can perceive he makes out between them. For as to the Pleasure and Pain *naturally* consequent to the Practice of Virtue and Vice, which the *Deist* calls the *future* Rewards and Punishments of them, they are Rewards and Punishments only in *Name*; nor can the *Deist* upon his own Principles pretend

CHAP. tend to any other *Hereafter-Interest* in Virtue,
 XVI. but that *Hereafter-Pleasure*. Now if that Plea-
 ~~~~~ sure is no more than the *natural* Consequence  
 of Virtue, then it is inseparable from it; and  
 then the *Atheist* is entitled to as good a Share of  
 it as the *Deist*. Tho' he does not believe the Im-  
 mortality of the Soul, he can make no Altera-  
 tion as to its After-existence: And therefore if  
 he practises Virtue here upon the same Principle  
 with the *Deist*, the same Consequence will follow  
 his Actions, and be its future Appendix, whe-  
 ther he intended or desir'd it, or not. This Au-  
 thor declares either against being *bribed* or *ter-  
 rified into an honest Practice* \* by God; which is  
 the same thing as to despise his Rewards, and defy  
 his Punishments.

IN *Heathen* Countries, ancient or modern, a  
*Deist* is a Character of Sense and Value before  
 God, and Man; the Wisest of them were sen-  
 sible of the Want of *true* Revelation, and long'd  
 for the Benefit of it: And the Commonalty  
 were influenc'd by a confus'd Belief and Expec-  
 tation of *positive* Retributions in a *future* State;  
 and therefore in that Respect, upon a better Foot-  
 ing, than *Deists* in a *Christian* Country. For  
 these reject *positive* Rewards and Punishments  
 of the true Revelation, and in some measure re-  
 ject the Revelation on Account of the Sanction  
 of the *Punishment*; which, by the way, is a very  
 ridiculous Reason for refusal: Because the bene-  
 ficial Consequence of their embracing is so very  
 great, the *worst* Terror of the Punishment is  
 levell'd *against their Refusal*, for subduing their  
 stubborn Will; and every one that receives the

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 97.

Revelation has it in their own Power to *feel* no ill Effects from an Objection, that is designed to save them. *The Worm* of Conscience *that never dies* may be the *natural* Punishment of Sin; but to that is superadded the *Fire that never shall be quenched*.

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WHEN *these* Deists therefore talk of *future* Rewards and Punishments, they still take care to talk as if they believed them not, to be sure, not as such. *Such a Person* believing Rewards or Retributions \*, &c. can mean no more according to their Scheme than, *if* such a Person believes, &c. For this Author, lest he should have advanc'd too much, takes care afterwards in his *Miscellaneous Reflections*, to declare himself, and prevent Mistakes. "Even *Conscience*, I fear, such as is "owing to religious Discipline, will make but "a slight Figure where this *Taste* is set amiss. "Among the Vulgar perhaps it may do Wonders. A *Devil* and a *Hell* may prevail, where "a *Fail* and a *Gallows* are thought insufficient. "But such is the Nature of the liberal, polish'd, "and refined Part of Mankind; so far are they "from the mere Simplicity of Babes and Sucklings; that instead of applying the Notion "of a future Reward or Punishment to their "immediate Behaviour in Society, they are apt, "much rather, *thro' the whole Course of their* "Lives, to shew evidently that they look on "the pious Narrations to be indeed no better "than Childrens Tales, or the Amusement of "the mere Vulgar †."

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 71:  
pag. 177.

† *Ibid.* Vol. III:



As to his profound Respect and religious Veneration of the sacred and solemn *Mysteries of Revelation*, and his steady *Orthodoxy, Resignation*, and *intire Submission* to the truly *Christian and Catholick* Doctrines of our *Holy Church*, as by Law establish'd, pag. 315, 316. he had the Privilege of his *Ridicule* to come off of that, as meant in *Jest*, tho' *declared*, as any one may read, in solemn Earnestness. It is well, if by the same *Ridicule*, his Followers have not learn'd to justify themselves in the abominable Hypocrisy of receiving the *Sacrament* for Places, when they know in their Conscience they believe nothing of the Matter. And their Religion as to Oaths sworn upon the *Bible* may as justly be suspected.

FOR as they believe those Rewards and Punishments in no other Sense, than as they are the *natural* Consequences of their Actions; and reject the Belief of any *positive* Retribution of any Good or Evil, but what is the neat Produce and natural Sequel of the Action itself: They influence and operate not as *Rewards and Punishments* to be distributed *positively* and *legally* by God as a *Governor*; but as *mere Consequences*, which would follow from the Action whether there was any Law, any Sanction, any Account to be given, any Judge, any God. For that Action, which *naturally* produces *all* the Good, or Evil hereafter, operates of *itself* without the Assistance of Law, Sanction, Belief of future Account, Judge, or God.

AND therefore if God is believed not to have that Power, or not to take that Care to reward  
Virtue,

Virtue, and punish Vice, with some further *positive, legal* Good and Evil, than what is the *natural* Effect and Consequence of the Action; the Thoughts of God, Judge, or future Account, can have no Power left to influence and oblige to the Action. The Action on Account of its Consequence is all that obliges; and yet no body to take an Account of the Performance or Non-performance of it. God is out of the Case, if he has nothing to add besides the *natural* Consequence, for that adds itself without his Interposal.

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I AM confirm'd in this by what Mr. *Locke* has observed, *H. Understanding*, Book II. Chap. xxviii. §. 6. "It would be in vain for one intelligent Being to set a Rule to the Actions of another, if he had it not in his Power to reward the Compliance with, and punish Deviation from his Rule, by some Good and Evil, that is not the natural Product or Consequence of the Action itself. For that being a natural Convenience, or Inconvenience, would operate of itself without a Law. This, if I mistake not, is the true Nature of all Law, properly so called." He adds a little after, "He [God] has a Right to give a Rule whereby Men should govern themselves: We are his Creatures: He has Goodness and Wisdom to direct our Actions to that which is best: And he has Power to enforce it by Rewards and Punishments, of infinite Weight and Duration, in another *Life*; for no body can take us out of his Hands. This is the only true Touchstone of *moral Rectitude*; and by comparing them to this Law, it is, that Men judge of the most considerable *moral Good* or  
" *Evil*

CHAP. “ *Evil* of their Actions ; that is, whether as  
 XVI. “ *Duties*, or *Sins*, they are like to procure them  
 “ Happiness or Misery from the Hand of the  
 “ *Almighty*.” Conform to this rational Principle, the great *Apostle*, who labour’d more than them all, declares the *Premium* of his Virtue not to consist only in inward Satisfaction, but that a *Crown of Righteousness* was laid up for him, to be given him by the Lord the righteous Judge AT THE GREAT DAY ; and to all those, as well as himself, that lov’d and waited for his glorious Appearing. There doubtless is a Joy and Satisfaction of Mind, a natural Happiness and Self-Enjoyment attendant upon the Habit and Disposition of Virtue, independent upon the Gospel-Dispensation and its future Distributions ; and being annex’d as Fruit to a Tree, may go along with the virtuous Heathens to bless them in another World. But the *remunerative*, *adjudg’d*, *supervenant* Happiness allotted to the Righteous at that Day (and so of Misery, over and above the natural Disquietude of Vice) is the Effect of the *Mediation* of *Christ*, and proceeds from the bountiful Goodness, and severe Judgment of God, in that merciful Dispensation towards Men. So that, whilst a virtuous Heathen in a Heathen Country may enjoy his Degree of Happiness hereafter ; the virtuous *Deist* in a *Protestant* State (if such there can be, considering the *Opposition* of their Mind to the only Truth that can fructify Virtue) will for their Infidelity be cursed by that Judge, and wither’d away like the Fig-Tree, from the natural good Effects of Virtue. So contrary to Nature, and Truth, and the real conscientious Good of Society, and of themselves, is the Religion of the *Deists*.

FOR as to *Fear* of future Punishment, this Author has taken care to run that down as *Entbusiasm*. Speaking of the Nature of that Passion, he says, “ It can hardly be without some Mixture of *Entbusiasm*, and Horrors of a superstitious Kind \*.” If these Men have cheerfully thrown off the judicial Distribution of avenging Punishment hereafter, what Hold, what Security can the Magistrate or Society have of such Persons Fidelity to *sovereign*, or *social* Rights; which so very frequently and unavoidably depend upon a conscientious Regard to an *Oath*? But what Conscience can he have of that Appeal to God, who believes he will not positively inflict any thing on him in another Life for the Breach of it? God is only a modish speculative Theory to adorn Discourse, or an Inquiry after Virtue, but he is a God not to be fear’d in their Actions; or to be govern’d by; or appealed to in an *Oath*.

AND this way of *not fearing* God is the true Secret of the Method, of what he calls putting himself and his Disciples into *good Humour*, whenever they think upon him †. And he gives this Reason of not having any Fear of him; *for it is Malice only, and not Goodness, that makes us afraid* ||; which I have confuted before. The requisite Fear that evil Doers should maintain towards *Civil* Government, is derived from the Fear of *God*, the supreme *religious* Governor over Men, as its Fountain, and is fed by it. Governors are the Image of God, as *Governors*:

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 307.

† *Ibid.* pag. 22, 33.

|| *Ibid.* pag. 39.

But



CHAP. But how should the Image be respected, when  
 .XVI. the *Principal* is neglected? Is not this the old  
 Misdemeanour, is not this renewing the great  
 Offence against God, and *Society*, *verbis ponere,*  
*re tollere*? To grant the Belief of a God in  
*Words*, and as a mere *Word*, and by *Infidel*  
 Tenets at the same time subvert all *real* Ef-  
 fects of it.

BUT if there is most certainly some future Ac-  
 count, and the Light of Nature suggests it ;  
 and Christianity, ever following and unfolding  
 Nature and the Truth of Things, ratifies, and  
 renders it more explicit ; then there is a *Judge* ;  
 then there are Rewards and Punishments in good  
 earnest, and to some Purpose ; then they con-  
 sist of *additional*, *positive*, *legal* Pain, and Plea-  
 sure over and above what God has naturally an-  
 nex'd to the Performance of such and such Ac-  
 tions, as a *present* natural Encouragement, or Dis-  
 couragement to them ; and a *Foretaste* of *greater*,  
 to be hoped, or feared. It is very true, that Ha-  
 bits of Virtue are previously necessary to make  
 Heaven enjoyable, by seasoning the Understand-  
 ing, Will, and Affections to it ; and a great Part  
 of its Happiness indispensably depends upon the  
 Degrees of that Qualification, as our bodily Senses  
 are necessary to enjoy this World : But some fur-  
 ther positive additional Enjoyments (as it is na-  
 tural to suppose the Wages differs from the  
 Work) seem to be the Favour of that Reward,  
 whether by enlarging the Faculties, or multi-  
 plying the Objects, or both ; or by other Ad-  
 ditions that have not entered into the Heart of  
 Man to conceive. As temporal Life is the Qua-  
 lification, but not the Giver of temporal En-  
 joyments ; so Virtue is a *Qualification*, but not  
 the

the Giver of future Crowns of Glory and Felicity : For they are *adjudg'd*, and are *given* ; nevertheless it is requir'd in the Nature of Things, that a previous Taste be contracted, a Temper and Constitution fitted to render the Person capable of enjoying the *Gift*.

It would, otherwise, seem a formal Piece of Pageantry to summon all the World to Judgment ; only to tell the Righteous, and the Wicked, very gravely, that they should enjoy or suffer the *natural* Pleasure and Pain resulting from their Actions, for the whole Duration of their Being, without any thing to interrupt. They knew that before they went out of the World ; and the Judge's telling them so, ever so sententiouſly, makes neither of them one Syllable better, nor worſe, in their State. But, at the great Discrimination of every Man according to his Works——*Go you to this Hand—You curſed to the other—Enter you Bleſſed this Place of Joy—Dwell you in Light—I caſt you into outer Darkneſs—Take you Dominion over five Cities—You over ten—Depart you to many Stripes——You to few——*diſtinctly demonſtrates on the Right Hand and the Left, *additional, poſitive* Pleaſure and Pain of the higheſt Nature. If the punitive Pain, or recompenſing Pleaſure and Glory were confin'd only to the Mind, retroſpecting its Actions in this World, and looking forward into the eternal State of its own Temper and Condition conſequent upon thoſe Actions ; what need of the *Reſurrection* of the *Body*, or ſolemn Severation to *Places* for ever ſeparate ; if the Places themſelves were not, together with the reſpective Treatment, *juridically, poſitively* remunerative, and vindictive ?

BESIDES,

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BESIDES, if Rewards and Punishments were left wholly to *natural Consequences* of Mens Actions, then, as there is a Miscellany of good and bad Actions (more or less) in all Men, every Man would be both rewarded and punish'd; which destroys the future Distinction, and Allotment. That Distinction therefore and Allotment can be supported on nothing but an *interposing Judge*, who knows the Thoughts of all Men, and makes solemn Severation and Distribution, before all Men and Angels, to every Man according to his Works. Besides, what is it that makes Faith towards God, or towards our Lord Jesus Christ, or Repentance from dead Works, or Obedience either to natural Religion, or to the Gospel, so indispensable, but this quickning Article of Belief and Practice, the *Resurrection of the Dead* and a *future Judgment*? Inasmuch as without this final End and Account of our Actions, they would all be in vain, and of no Profit beyond the Grave. It is Unbelief with respect to the *Promises* of entring into Rest which constituted the *evil Heart* of Unbelief, and for ever excluded from the *Rest*; so the like Unbelief of the *Deists* totally subverts Natural Religion, and entirely vacates all the religious Effects of it, at the same time it pretends to the Belief of God. But if they believe God the first Cause, they ought to consider him also as the last *End* of Man.

THUS God's judging the World in Righteousness by the Man *Christ Jesus* makes up the true Account to Reason of his governing it. If he is the *Governor*, that implies *Laws*; and that supposes some *Sanctions* in the Apprehension of those  
who

who have a Sense in their Hearts of those Laws: CHAP. XVI.  
If Laws, there must of course be a Judge of  
Obedience, and Disobedience to them.

AND if the Judge himself, before he would take that Office upon him, came into the World first as a *Mediator* to teach those Laws most perfectly, and explicitly unfold those Sanctions as far as they could be apprehended by reason of our bodily Imperfections; if he obey'd those Laws himself, according to which he would pass Sentence; and, if by his own Death he made Reconciliation for Transgressions against them, upon Condition of renewing Obedience with sincere Repentance, and better Performance, as Men were able, and of believing in him (where Belief was proposed) who by the most divine Generosity did so much to supply all their unavoidable Deficiencies; and if, before he left the World, he instituted Means, Aids, Helps, and Instruments for facilitating Mens Repentance, and improving their Devotion, and Obedience; then he might well return to Heaven, and before God, and Man take upon him the Reins of Government and Judgment over Man, as the fittest *King* and *Judge* that could be elected by either of them.

IF a Judge, then inevitably follow those *positive sensible* Retributions, visible Glory, Honour and Distinction of the Good from the Bad, in the *audible* Sentence, *visible* Effects, and *eternal* Marks of God's Favour, and Displeasure towards our Behaviour in this Life. On the one Hand, *seeing* God as he is; *being with Christ*, *Crowns*, *Rivers of Pleasure*, &c. On the other Hand, *Darkness*, *Companionship* of Devils, *Dis-*  
grace



CHAP. *grace and Gnashing of Teeth, Lakes of Fire and*  
 XVI. *Brimstone, &c.* capable of communicating eternal Felicity, and everlasting Anguish, as well to the raised *sensible* Body, as to the rational reflecting Soul. A joyful, and a dreadful Hearing the final Ends of our several Actions! And those are the *external Motives* I have been treating of.

BUT tho' they are external, yet being the Object and End of Actions, they are the *first* moral Motives that set all to work; they are the End of us, and of our Actions, therefore tie us unto God our Governor, our Actions to his Laws and Covenant; making our Actions Morality or Duty, and us, knowing those Consequences, and conscious of those Obligations, moral, accountable Agents. They are the final Difference and Distinction, State and Allotment of moral Good and Evil; being the recompensing Possession of the greatest Good, or greatest Evil, God, or the Devil; and of the Virtue in Action and Disposition, of following those moral Commands or Imitations of God, which are Directions to that chiefest Good; or of the contrary Vice of not following them; which inevitably, with open and everlasting Distinction, plunges into the greatest Evil. They are the *ultimate*, therefore most capital Motives that govern and controul the lesser inferior ones of Life; to poise the Desires, and to balance the Passions that are engaged about the subordinate Means and Ends, the Things of this Life, by *setting the Affection upon Things above*; living not by Sight but *Faith* in another World, as it is open'd and revealed to the Christian, who has those *exceeding great and precious Promises* made  
 over

over to him on purpose, to make him *Partaker* CHAP.  
*of the Divine Nature*; that seeing his Duty is XVI.  
incorporated into and animated by his Interest, it might the sooner take root in his indigent Nature, and cause it to grow up from less to greater Perfection, from a human to a Divine Nature. Every subordinate End is a Motive to the Use of the Means subservient to that End; and when these subordinate Ends are not pursued as ultimate resting Places, but progressive to the *great* End, then they are duly influenced and regulated by it. And when the Influence of these Motives operates in Conjunction with the Means, Aids, Helps, and Instruments mentioned in this Treatise, the happy Issue is eternal Life.





## CHAP. XVII.

## Of HELPS and INSTRUMENTS.

**B**Y these I mean the *Ministration* of the *Word* and *Sacraments* in the publick Worship of God thro' the *Mediator*. Wherein, especially, the *Ministry* are ordain'd under him as **HELPERS** of the Faith, *Co-workers with God*, and of all the Virtues flowing from it; and to continue *publick* INSTRUMENTS of the Salvation of Souls, as faithful *Stewards* of the Mysteries of Godliness; if not *Ambassadors*, as the Author of *Character*. Vol. III. pag. 336, derides, at least, *Curates* under the great Shepherd, the People's Servants for the Shepherd's sake; or, in a few Words, the *appointed* surviving *Blessed* of Men, in *Christ's* stead, to be reconciled to God, to the End of the World.

As we are *sociable* Creatures, and the Intention of Society is mutual Assistance in common Good; Society in the Worship of God, the *greatest* common Good, is pointed out by Nature, as the supreme Desire and Concern; and therefore *positively* commanded and directed of God as his rightful Tribute and our own greatest Benefit. For as *Society* has a great and natural Influence upon all our Actions,  
and

and Passions \*, so has it likewise in our religious Worship. And as Happiness is the End of Society, jointly and severally ; and Religion the supreme Means of that Happiness ; enjoining Obedience to the Civil Laws upon a good Conscience towards Men, and supplying the unavoidable Defects of those Laws from ever varying Circumstances, from the never changing *good Conscience towards God* ; which infuses *inward Honesty*, and *secret Integrity* and Goodness in performing all the *relative Duties* : It becomes the Duty of every Member of the Society to recognize that *Religion*, *publickly*, and frequently, as Opportunity serves ; as ever he pretends to be a sincere Promoter of the publick Happiness, or his own.

THE *forsaking the assembling ourselves together, as the Manner of some is*, is therefore justly assign'd as the Beginning, and continuing Cause of *Apostasy* from the Faith, and Practice of *Christianity*, and their own Happiness : And of that *wilful*, most provoking, complicated *Sin*, of falling off from the *Truth* after they have received the Knowledge of it ; *treading under Foot the Son of God*, counting his sanctifying saving Blood of the New Covenant an *unholy*, despicable Thing ; and doing despite to the Spirit of Grace. And that

\* Lord Bacon observes, “ it is one of the greatest Secrets of Nature, that Mens Passions are capable of being rais'd to higher Degrees in Company, than in Solitude ; and that we sooner grieve, fear, rejoice, love, admire, when we behold many others so moved, than when we are alone.” And consequently they who would have the best Subjects, and be secure from the ill Effects of their *irregular* Passions, should take due care that the *best* Objects of Love and all the other Passions be publickly administred, and regularly impressed upon the Assemblies of their People.



CHAP. is no less in the Event, than wilfully delivering  
 XVII. themselves up to an Incapacity of receiving any  
 Benefit from the *Sacrifice for Sin*, offer'd up by  
 the Mediator; and running themselves into the  
*forest Punishment and fiery Indignation which shall*  
*devour the Adversaries of Christ, Heb. x. 25, &c.*  
 As to the Neglect and Contempt of these Things,  
 the *Day, Place, the Affair transacting, the Per-*  
*sons officiating* \*.

CAN any thing be more reasonable than for  
 every one of us in our own Persons (for there is  
 no such thing as Proxy in the Worship of God)  
 to assemble together, and provoke one another  
 to that eternal good Work of paying Homage,  
 in common, to the good and great Benefactor of  
 our common Mercies and Blessings, and to take  
 the Provocation so from one another, as to imi-  
 rate with a godly Zeal? We are so framed by  
 Nature, and so affianced by Likeness and Love  
 of Society, as to be very influenceable to act as  
 we see others, especially Numbers act; making  
 that the very Argument for so doing: To be  
 sure, it is so in respect of Evil; and ought it not  
 to be so in the better Application of that In-  
 fluence to that which is *Good*? How ready should  
 the lukewarm Christian be to come into the  
 Courts of the Lord, to warm his Devotion at the  
 fervour of other People's; and, if there is but  
 one Righteous in the Congregation, to gain to  
 himself the Advantage of mixing his dubious,  
 with the others availing Prayers? Besides, it  
 contributes the most of any thing, to satisfy the  
 Publick, who cannot see the Heart, that they,

\* See the *Bishop of Lond. Past.* pag. 42 to 53, which is  
 in so many Hands as an excellent *Preservative*.

who frequent the publick' Worship, do indeed put on the Face and Appearance of some Conscience; for that is the Way of giving Pledges to one another, in Conjunction with other good Behaviour which should flow from that Fountain of a good Profession of it, that we have indeed some Conscience to, and Fear of that God, who overlooks our Duty to one another with his future Calling us to Account. If it is the Voice of Nature and the common Decree of Mankind, that Publick Honour is due to God, and is to be paid by Publick Worship of him; and God has appointed a certain *Time*, and some certain *Place* for that Payment, he that customarily and deliberately disregards either of them, may well be look'd upon as a prophane Refuser of that Honour, Denyer of that Payment, and Contemner of that God who has commanded the Thing, the Time, and Place; tho' outward Ordinances are of no avail before him, unless inward Religion, the Thing pointed to by them, grows out of them; *the Temple of the Lord* being expressly appointed to *amend our Ways, and our Doings*; yet Internal Religion must be as regularly nurtur'd by suitable Outward Religion as a Plant is by Rain, or the Stomach by the Mouth, in order to the Continuance of the Life, the Circulation, the Growth in Virtue, and the Favour of God.

THEY must therefore be Enthusiasts as to the Good of Society, or Atheists as to Religion, who forsake the Assembling themselves together upon account of so much Good to the Publick in general, and to every Individual of it. They are either so *full* of God, that they don't care how publicly they disvalue him; or else have

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so *little* of him and Consideration, that they are equally void of natural, as they are of reveal'd Religion. However they may please themselves, and deceive others in talking about natural Religion, if they make a Conscience of refraining from publick Worship in every Community; the Inference is very plain, that either they have no Conscience at all, or else a very mischievous one. For pretending to the End without the Means, which both natural and reveal'd Religion points out to be ordinarily necessary for obtaining that End, is the extreme of Irreligion, as well as want of publick Spirit.

IT pleased God in his great Wisdom to lay down only *general* Rules for Observance in Mens Association in his Worship; as an Opportunity *design'd* and *given* from Heaven, for Men to exercise their Christian Charity in judging of one another, in their Judgment and Choice, which are the *best*, of the *Circumstantials* attendant upon the several Parts of Worship, by that Prudence in sorting, and Discretion in fitting what best suits and promotes the Ends, *i. e.* the greatest Reverence and Honour of God, and the best Edification of the Worshippers, in all Godliness, Honesty, and Peace.

AND as *Liberty* duly *regarding* those most valuable Ends is ever to be *protected*; so Liberty officiously offering itself *contrariant* to those Ends is ever to be restrained. And because of this subsisting Liberty, there arises the Necessity of *Government*: And that Government shews itself to be *best* adjusted to those Ends, when it indulges and strengthens that Liberty, which watches over those Ends, as its unalienable Right, and  
checks

checks that which deviates from the same, as making a false Pretence to Right. For the Object of all *true* valuable religious Liberty is the aforesaid true and valuable Good in publick Worship; and that which would depart from it, is not Liberty, but Licentiousness, tending to Confusion, and to all the Mischief that can arise from dangerous Mistakes, or at least, a dangerous opposing Zeal, in Things confessedly *indifferent* in their own Nature, where Moderation of Zeal should always keep its Station: But after they have gain'd the Stamp of publick Authority in any Country, the Scale of Indifferency certainly turns to the *Side* of Authority, and should always secure the greater Respect, if not an universal Compliance.

As to *publick Worship* of the Deity, I shall produce the *Religion of Nature delin.* “ A Man, “ says that Author, may be consider'd as a “ Member of *Society*, and *as such*, he ought “ to worship God, (if he has the Opportunity “ of doing it: If there are proper Prayers used “ publickly, which they may resort to; and his “ Health, &c. permit.) Or the Society may “ be consider'd as *one Body* that has common “ Interests and Concerns, and *as such* is oblig'd “ to worship the Deity, and offer one common “ Prayer. Beside, there are many, who know “ not of themselves *how* to pray, perhaps can “ not so much as read. These too must be “ taken *as they are*, and consequently some Time “ and Place, *appointed*, where they may have “ suitable Prayers read to them, and be guided “ in their Devotions. And further, toward “ the keeping Mankind in order, it is *necessary* “ there should be some Religion profess'd, and “ even



CHAP. “ even establish’d ; which cannot be without  
 XVII. “ some publick Worship. And were it not  
 “ for that Sense of Virtue, which is *principally*  
 “ preserv’d (so far as it is preserv’d) by na-  
 “ tional *Forms* and *Habits* of Religion, Men  
 “ would soon lose it *all*, run wild, prey upon  
 “ one another, and do what else the worst of  
 “ Savages do \*.”

IN regard of that Reproach and Contempt pour’d out so plentifully upon the *Persons officiating* in the publick Worship of these Nations, by the two Authors I have been animadverting upon, and others of their Stamp ; instead of entering into a Defence of the *Ministry*, I congratulate them, upon the sensible Pleasure and Honour they continue to do us, by the abusive Persecution of their Tongues, and Pens. Especially because it is a genuine Sample so honourably and sincerely consistent with their boasted Principle of universal Benevolence †, which they constantly proclaim to be due to *all* Men, and yet as constantly shut out *Ecclesiasticks* of all Persuasions from any Benefit, or Title to it ; as if they were worse than all Men in the Community, for taking an Employment upon them for the general Good. If Christianity in a Protestant Nation is a *Trade*, as some affirm, it is however a Trade between God and Man, of God’s own

\* *Religion of Nature delin.* p. 124.

† The Deists make the Whole of Religion to consist in *Benevolence*, or, as they vary the Phrase, *in doing as we would be done by* ; tho’ it manifestly is no more than one *Third* of the Religion of the End. They designedly leave out of their System, Duty to God, and Ourselves ; and by that Device would make Religion and Civil Government, this World and the next, to be one and the same Thing.

erecting ;

ereciting; and they who are Partners in that Trade have all the Profits, whilst the *Clerks* have no more than writing Wages and Attendance under the polite Appellations of the *black Tribe*, &c.\*

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THE grand Traducer certainly owes them a Shame; they would never else be so much at his Service, as to lay aside all *Respect* to the Reader, and *seek* Occasion, and make it at every Turn, and almost in every Chapter, run out into Digression, in order to give *us* a Cast of their Benevolence; and by an egregious Imposition upon the Reader, constantly endeavouring to involve all Protestant Clergy under the Odium of *Popish Priestcraft*; from Instances of Misconduct only applicable to the latter: As if false, indiscriminate Accusation was neither Sin, nor Shame, nor any Seducement of the Judgment into Error and *Infidelity*.

THE *Religion of Nat. delin.* will assure them the contrary. “ Among other Prejudices, there “ is one of a peculiar Nature, which you must “ have observ’d to be one of the *greatest* Causes “ of *modern Irreligion*. Whilst some Opinions “ and Rites are carried to such an immoderate “ Height, as exposes the Absurdity of them to “ the View of almost every body but them who “ raise them, not only Gentlemen of the *belles* “ *Lettres*, but even Men of common Sense, “ many times see through them; and then out “ of Indignation and an excessive Renitence, “ not separating that which is *true* from that “ which is *false*, they come to deny both, and

\* So the Author of the *Characteristicks* styles them.

“ fall

CHAP. “ fall back into the contrary Extreme, a Con-  
XVII. “ *tempt of all Religion in general.*” p. 60, 61.

IT is certainly our Honour, that such Men, resolving to continue what they are, count *us* their Enemies *for the work sake*, and express it so vehemently in Season and out of Season; because *we are not for their turn, we are clean contrary to their doings; we upbraid them with their offending the law, we object to their infamy the transgressing the true Oracles of Reason, the sound certain Nature of Things, the Fountain of Truth and of Religion, and their perverse Usage of the Kindness of Heaven; therefore they look on us, only with malevolent Eyes, they speak of us every where, they treat us at all times with despitefulness,* Wisd. xi. 12, 19. It is most certain, that *if we please such Men, we are not,* what we ought to be, *Servants of Christ,* Gal. i. 10. It is the strongest Proof that can be given, “ the Confession of an Enemy,” that we retain Integrity to our Master *Christ*, and are useful and necessary to the Support of his Religion; at the same time it is a ridiculous owning the Weakness of their own Objections against it, as often as they have recourse to such sorry Weapons.

“ THE sacred Office can never be hurt by  
“ their Sayings, if it is not first reproached by  
“ our Doings.” So long as the Ends and Uses  
of the Ministry duly observ’d, will assuredly  
establish and endear us to all Christians; so long  
we have nothing so much to disvalue, as the Ca-  
lumnies of these Haters, of that Name; or to  
dread as their verbal, or written Praises: Their  
Commendation of *Particulars* means nothing  
more

more than a Signal to Companions of *their* readiness to betray his Cause, and go over to their Designs of subverting it. We know whom we have believed, and are well apprised of our Reward, when Men speak evil of us *falsly* for his sake ; therefore such Praise ought never to be counted of, because it can never proceed *à laudato Viro* : Consequently the Ministry have always the most valuable Effects, when we enjoy the Reverse of it. And, I really believe, nay, I prophesy, if they abate not of their Bigotry, they are so silly, as not to take care to disappoint us of that Encomium, *of our Enemies being found Liars against us*, and their Defamation our Merit ; whilst we severally have the Consolation of knowing, *that the Reproaches of them that reproach Thee, O Christ, are fallen upon ME!* But let them know, the more they rage against *us*, the less they have to reply to our Arguments ; and so the Cause and we triumph together over them.

BESIDES, what Advantage, what Alteration for the better has not the true Christian Religion imported to these Realms with respect to its *Clergy*, above those of *their* Religion, the old natural Religion once establish'd in these Nations ? The *Druids* were invested with the Prerogative of adjudging Property, deciding all Controversies, distributing Rewards and Punishments ; and they who did not submit to their Determinations were excommunicated from all Honours and Privileges, deprived of the Benefit of the Laws, and held in Abhorrence. *Cæsar's Comm. Lib. VI.* They have, 'tis true, no Abuse of *Holy Times*, or *Holy Offices* to answer for, because they are so impious as to have neither *Time*, *Person*,

or



CHAP. or Office for publick Religion; whilst by Insincerity and Hypocrisy they blush not to defile the Honour and Name of *Gent.* in occasionally mixing with *Christian* Prayers recommended to Heaven in the Name of the *Mediator*, and partaking of *Sacraments* built upon him, in order to grasp the Civil Offices in Christian Countries. One thing we are very sure of, that they are sincere in their Enmity, and therefore safe from their Flattery.

BUT notwithstanding the Beam in their Eye, should they truly hit at a Mote in ours, it would be the greatest Prudence to pull it out immediately, and take away Occasion from them that seek it; we very well know the great Profit that is to be made of an Enemy and his Scurrility, according to the Advice of *Plutarch*, but more especially the suffering Precedents and Patterns from that Treatment in Christian Annals, making us the more circumspect to attain, and not fall short in some eminent Degree of the Religion of the End, whilst we ourselves are entrusted by God, and Man to accomplish, by our continual *Beseechings in Christ's stead*, the same End in others, thro' our intent Ministration of his Reasons, his Means, his Aids, his Motives to the furtherance of the same; considering that well known Maxim, *Malus Sacerdos de Sacerdotio suo crimen acquirit, non Dignitatem.*

THE Author of *Characteristicks*, if he was not so whimsically conceited \* in his Mistakes about the Nature of Things, might have known when he wrote his *Advice to an Author*, that the Use

\* An Epithet given him by *Philaleth. Lipsiens.*

and Necessity of publick Preaching arose from the general Neglect of Mens *recognizing themselves* \*, and considering their *main Scope*, and *End* in the Occurrences of their Lives ; for want of some proper impartial Person to hold out the *Looking-Glass* to give them the inward View of themselves †, and shew themselves to themselves as they stand accountable to their Maker and Redeemer ; and to *form the home Acquaintance* with their Hearts, what manner of Persons they are, and ought to be ; and to remove the *Interest of Ambition, Avarice, Corruption, and every sly insinuating Vice* as prevents this Interview ‡, and to inspect and audit the false *Opinions and Fancies* that arise to the shaking the Constancy of the *Will* || ; that by observing them, in time, they may gain a *will*, and insure themselves a certain *Resolution* ; by which they shall know where to find themselves ; be sure of their own *Meaning and Design* ; and as to all their *Desires, Opinions, and Inclinations*, be warranted one and the same Person to-day as yesterday, and to-morrow as to-day : And that *Appetite, the elder Brother of Reason*, on every Contest, may not take the Advantage of drawing all to his own Side †, seeing the *Imaginations and Fancies on his Side* discover themselves mere *Sophisters and Impostors*, who have not the least to do with the *Party of Reason, and good Sense* \*.

Now seeing this Knowledge of ourselves, and Examination of our State, by the Tendency of our Thoughts and Actions, and the Correction and Amendment of what is amiss, is so gene-

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 170.

† *Ibid.* pag. 171.

‡ *Ibid.* pag. 172, 173.

|| *Ibid.* pag. 185.

† *Ibid.*

pag. 187.

\* *Ibid.* pag. 188.

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rally neglected, as his *Advice* supposes; instead of superseding, as he intended \*, this helps to establish an Order of *Preachers*, and to recommend their useful Service.

FOR are they not incumbent upon that very thing in Publick, to bring Men to know, and inspect themselves, by the Help of that true Knowledge which came down from Heaven, to give them the true Insight and Emendation of themselves, as deriving from the same Source whence came the Frame and Fabrick of their Being? And do they not in the *domestick* Presence of God, and Christ, hold out that recognizing edifying *Mirrou*r to the Face of the Congregation, that every one by the Reflection may see himself for himself (not his Neighbour) what manner of Person he is; and *instruct, reprove, correct*, according to the Tenor and Directions of the same; that every one giving their constant Attendance, *may be thoroughly furnish'd to all good Works*? And do they not moreover *beseech Men in Christ's stead*, the great Teacher of all Righteousness, both of the Religion of the End, and of the Means; who open'd the Way to the Favour of God, and came down from Heaven to establish all the efficacious Means for surely conducting all Believers thither, *to be reconciled to God* and to their own Happiness; and constantly pursue that End, in the constant use of the appointed Means? Do they not labour in that very Thing, in beseeching Men in the Bowels of Love to be reconciled to God; and, as they are adopted, to become therefore obedient Children in Christ. *Thus saith the Lord*, and thus echo his Labourers, *have I not*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 167, 174.

*pray'd*

pray'd you as a Father his Sons, as a Mother her CHAP. Daughters, and a Nurse her young Babes, that ye XVII. would be my People, as I am your God, that ye should be my Children, and I be your Father,

2 Efd. i. 28. And do they not labour in distinguishing, directing, and applying the Means, to the accomplishing the Ends? And shew the Sophistry of the deluding Pleasures, Honours, Profits of this World; the Deceitfulness of Sin; the Devices of Satan; the Honesty and Simplicity of Virtue; the Integrity of fearing and loving God, and keeping his Commandments; and of believing likewise in the *Mediator*, and honouring him; and of doing no despite to the *Spirit of Grace*, but concur with his Assistance; and faithfully persevere to respect those as the faithful true Friends of their infallible Happiness, pointing out to Christians sojourning in this World all the *true* Pleasures, Honours, Profits of it; and immensely greater in that which is to come?

AND if, in the nature of things, and successive Experience of the World, there will always be most need of improving and encouraging that second Degree of Wisdom, *of following good Advice*, which is to supply in the Conduct of Men the (generally absent) first Degree of Wisdom of doing always what is right and good of *oneself*; and if there will always be Ignorance of saving Truth and religious Obligation in the *growing* Generation; *Mistakes* about Religion in very many; *Heedlessness* of the great concern in multitudes; and *Forgetfulness* of duty in all, even the most knowing, even in Protestant Countries; and that will continue as long as Christians are *Men*, incumber'd with *Body*, diverted with the  
Hurry



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*Hurry of secular care, and entangled with the Love, the deceitful Charms of false Happiness in their Pursuit of earthly Things, besides various other Hindrances of Religion; and as long as Men have, by Nature, an Appetite for, and a Relish to some Spice of Novelty, in the Enjoyment of the most substantial Things that belongs to their Sustenance; I mean also of old salutary Truths, under new Lights and Representations making their Address in the varying Language of every Age; so long the Necessity of publick Preaching will continue from Generation to Generation, in the Christian World. If a Deuteronomy in the Mosaick Law, and a second Epistle of an Apostle (2 Pet. i.) were necessary for explaining, and putting in Remembrance those things already known to Christians, in the Truth whereof they are already establish'd; the Rehearsal of those Scriptures, and upon that Rehearsal, bringing known Truths present to the Mind, explaining, enforcing, and beseeching according to Times and Seasons, Needs and Occasions, will be perpetually necessary to the Coming of Christ; and this doing the Work of an Evangelist, and making full Proof of the Ministry, necessarily requiring regular Appointment of, and Subordination in the same, will likewise in every Country, more or less, continue different Orders, Degrees, and Dignities. If they are not now the supporting Pillars of Truth, in the Household of Faith and Building of God, they are at least the Pilasters of it, both Useful, and Ornamental.*

I CONCLUDE this Head, with applicable Passages out of the learned Dean *Prideaux*. “As the *Jews* had their Synagogues in  
“ which

“ which the Law and the Prophets were read  
 “ unto them every Sabbath; so the Christians  
 “ had their Churches, in which from the Begin-  
 “ ning all the Doctrines and Duties of their  
 “ Religion were every Lord’s Day taught, in-  
 “ culcated, and explain’d unto them. And by  
 “ God’s Blessing upon this Method chiefly was  
 “ it, that this holy Religion still bore up against  
 “ all Oppressions, and notwithstanding the ten  
 “ Persecutions, and all other Artifices and Me-  
 “ thods of Cruelty and Oppression, which Hell  
 “ and Heathenism could devise to suppress it,  
 “ grew up and increased under them; which  
 “ *Julian the Apostate* was so sensible of, that  
 “ when he put all his Wits to work to find out  
 “ new Methods for the restoring the Heathen  
 “ Impiety, he could not think of any more  
 “ effectual for this Purpose, than to employ his  
 “ Philosophers to preach it up every Week to  
 “ the People in the same Manner, as the  
 “ Ministers of the Gospel did the Christian Re-  
 “ ligion. And had it not pleas’d God to cut  
 “ him off before he could put this Design in  
 “ Execution, it is to be fear’d his Success herein  
 “ would in a great Measure have answer’d what  
 “ he propos’d by it. But to Christians above  
 “ all others this must have been of the greatest  
 “ Benefit. For the Doctrines of our holy Re-  
 “ ligion having in them the sublimest Principles  
 “ of divine Knowledge, and the Precepts of  
 “ it containing all the Duties of Morality in the  
 “ highest Manner improv’d, nothing can be of  
 “ greater Advantage to us for the leading us to  
 “ the truest Happiness we are capable of, as  
 “ well in this Life as in that which is to come,  
 “ than to have these weekly taught and ex-  
 “ plain’d unto us, and weekly put home upon  
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“ our Conscience for the forming our Lives ac-  
 “ cording to them. And the Political State or  
 “ Civil Government of every Christian Country  
 “ is no less benefited thereby, than the Church  
 “ itself. For as it best conduceth to keep up  
 “ the Spirit of Religion among us, and to make  
 “ every Man know his Duty to God, his Neigh-  
 “ bour, and Himself; so it may be reckon’d of  
 “ all Methods the most conducive to preserve  
 “ Peace and good Order in the State. For  
 “ hereby Subjects are taught to be obedient to  
 “ their Prince and his Laws, Children to be  
 “ dutiful to their Parents, Servants to be faith-  
 “ ful to their Masters, and all to be just and  
 “ charitable, and pay all other Duties, which  
 “ in every Relation they owe to each other.  
 “ And in the faithful Discharge of these Duties  
 “ doth the Peace, good Order, and Happi-  
 “ ness of every Community consist. And to  
 “ be weekly instructed in these Duties, and to  
 “ be weekly excited to the Obedience of them,  
 “ is certainly the properest and most effectual  
 “ Method to induce Men hereto. And it may  
 “ justly be reckoned that the good Order,  
 “ which is now maintain’d in this Kingdom, is  
 “ more owing to this Method, than to any  
 “ other now in Practice among us for this End;  
 “ and that one good Minister by his weekly  
 “ Preaching and daily good Example, sets it  
 “ more forward than any two of the best Justices  
 “ of the Peace can, by their exactest Diligence  
 “ in the Execution of the Laws which they are  
 “ entrusted with. For these by the utmost of  
 “ their Coercions can go no farther, than restrain  
 “ the outward Acts of Wickedness; but the  
 “ other reforms the Heart within, and removes  
 “ all those evil Inclinations of it, from whence  
 “ they

“ they flow. And it is not to be doubted, but  
 “ that if this Method was once dropp’d among  
 “ us, the Generality of the People, whatever  
 “ else may be done to obviate it, would in seven  
 “ Years time relapse into as bad a State of Bar-  
 “ barity, as was ever in Practice among the  
 “ worst of our *Saxon* and *Danish* Ancestors.  
 “ And therefore supposing there was no such  
 “ thing in Truth and Reality, as that Holy  
 “ Christian Religion, which the Ministers of  
 “ the Gospel teach (as too many among us are  
 “ now permitted with Impunity to say) yet the  
 “ Service they do the Civil Government, in  
 “ keeping all Men to those Duties, in the Ob-  
 “ servance of which its Peace, good Order and  
 “ Happiness consist, may very well deserve the  
 “ Maintenance which they receive from it \*.”

As long as Man is conscious of God, he is  
 conscious of Religion to him, and that his  
 Conduct in this World ought to be steer’d by  
 that Compass to the Point of pleasing him.  
 Therefore there are, as there ought to be,  
 publick Explainers and Enforcers of that inter-  
 nal Compass of Action. Consequently the Con-  
 servators of, and Pleaders at the Tribunal of  
 Conscience, are the sure Supporters of Civil Tri-  
 bunals, by promoting Virtue, the Basis, and sup-  
 pressing Vice, the Bane of Society, at the Root and  
 Source; they ought to be acknowledg’d by all  
 Men, that, doing their Duty, they are the best of  
 Friends to Civil Government. How far they are  
 the Conservators of Learning, whence so many  
 Benefits flow to the Publick, is left to others  
 to report. Nay, of so great Help to Piety,

\* *Connection*, Part I. pag. 390, 391.



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Virtue, and the Furtherance of every Duty, is the Ministry in their *weekly* Ministrations, (tho' the *Deists* malign the Service, and would preclude the Publick from that Benefit) that they have been able to effect that *Reformation*, which inspired Prophets, with all their Threatnings back'd with a Power of *Miracles*, could not bring to pass, according to another Observation of the same truly judicious Author. " If it be ex-  
 " amin'd into, says he, how it came to pass,  
 " that the *Jews* were so prone to *Idolatry* before  
 " the *Babylonish* Captivity, and so strongly  
 " and cautiously, even to Superstition, fixed  
 " against it after that Captivity, the true reason  
 " thereof will appear to be, that they had the  
 " Law and the Prophets every Week constantly  
 " read unto them after that Captivity, which  
 " they had not before; for before that Capti-  
 " vity, they having no Synagogues for publick  
 " Worship, or publick Instruction, nor any  
 " Places to resort to for either, unless the  
 " Temple at *Jerusalem*, or the Cities of the  
 " *Levites*, or to the Prophets, when God was  
 " pleased to send such among them; for want  
 " hereof, great Ignorance grew among the Peo-  
 " ple: God was little known among them, and  
 " his Laws, in a manner, wholly forgotten.  
 " And therefore, as occasions offer'd, they were  
 " easily drawn into all the Superstitious and  
 " Idolatrous Usages of the neighbouring Na-  
 " tions, that liv'd round about them, till at  
 " length, for the Punishment hereof, God gave  
 " them up to a dismal Destruction in the *Baby-  
 " lonish* Captivity. But after that Captivity, and  
 " the Return of the *Jews* from it, Synagogues  
 " being erected among them in every City, to  
 " which

“ which they constantly resorted to publick CHAP.  
“ Worship, and where every Week they had XVII.  
“ the Law from the first, and after that from  
“ the time of *Antiochus*’s Persecution, the Pro-  
“ phets also read unto them, were by Sermons  
“ and Exhortations there delivered, at least  
“ every Sabbath, instructed in their Duty,  
“ and excited to the Obedience of it; this  
“ kept them in a thorough Knowledge of  
“ God and his Laws \*.”

\*. *Idem*. Part. I. Lib. VI.





## C H A P. XVIII.

*Of the permanent Efficacy, and Obligation  
of FAITH in the MEDIATOR.*

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**S**EEING then, in fine, that the *Mediator* was appointed of God upon the Fall of Man, as the Foundation of the new Covenant of Obedience, and all his future Mercies unto him, and the Fountain of his Remedy and Recovery ; being the Import of that never-failing Promise of subduing the Enemy of his Happiness, and of impartially blessing all the Nations upon Earth ; and the original Ground of that diffusive fundamental Principle of Natural Religion, *That he is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him* : And that, in due time, after several Renewals of that saving Promise, some good Preparation of the Knowledge of God, and of ourselves in our lapsed Condition was imparted from Heaven with a long Series of Prophecy, connected to the critical Time of Expectation ; he came into the World and manifested himself in our Flesh ; and re-establish'd the *Religion of the End*, the original Law of our Nature in the three Branches specified, and not only re-asserted its Obligation from the general Corruption it was fallen under in Theory, and Practice ; but improved our Knowledge in many Particulars, to the Conviction,

tion, or at least Admiration of all acquainted with it ; and not only taught a perfect Rule of Manners, but perfectly obey'd it ; and to his divine Life added innumerable Miracles to prove himself the *Son of God*, sent from his Father, the Father of all our Mercies, to give Life and Efficacy to the languishing and utterly dishearten'd *Religion of the Means*, Repentance and Prayer ; by dying a Propitiation for our Sins ; rising from the Dead ; ascending to the right Hand of God a perpetual Intercessor for us : And further, to enlighten those natural Means of sinful Men, and fasten the Engagement of the new Covenant, and perpetuate those Benefits, and incorporate them into our Constitution, to retrieve the decaying Impression, and rivet them into our Body and Soul, he instituted *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* ; and moreover procured to our Prayers in his Name, a new *internal Assistance* to our enfeebled Faculties ; and brought the Authority of God and himself over us to light, by bringing the Rewards and Punishments of his Laws to light, and to the Assurance of *his* Disposal of them at the last Day ; and instituted Helps and Instruments for the Administration of these Things, as we are sociable as well as accountable Creatures. And if this Mediator, *Christ the Lord*, rules, presides, directs, and animates all these Things to the Glory of God the Father, now, and to the End of the World ; then, as the true Light that came into the World, a *Law-giver* of them severally, *able to save, and destroy*, he might well enact to the Consciences of all Men, to whom these Presents and Blessings of his Gospel shall come, *Ye believe in God, believe also in ME* \*.

\* *John xiv.*



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 XVIII. Character of him in the Volume of the Book, *i. e.*  
*The Author and Finisher of our Faith? Heb. xii. 2.*

Thus should *Christ* dwell in our Hearts by FAITH, so as to be able to say with his Apostle, *The Life that I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me \**, whom having not seen we love; and in whom tho' now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory †. And this shews the true Sublime of those Expressions; *he desired to know nothing but JESUS CHRIST, and him CRUCIFIED* ||: for such a Death, tho' the great Scandal at first of a Saviour that could not save himself, a stumbling Block to the *Jews*, and to *Greeks* Foolishness; yet, with Respect to its inestimable Benefits, and the Methods of God in baffling the Devil, and giving Life to the World that way, is in that very Circumstance, preach'd and proclaim'd by him, to be *the Power of God and the Wisdom of God*; and therefore the *Glory* ‡, as it is the *Basis* of his Religion; and that Foolishness of God in the Eye of the *Greek* was wiser than any of their Philosophers, in Deeds and Doctrines, to make wise unto Salvation †. The Death of the Mediator being founded in the Nature of the *best* Government of God over sinful Man, is the true Sublime of Divine Government, therefore the Apostle might well place all his Glory, and consign all his Eloquence to it; being so much *the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of the Power* of all Superior, Divine, and therefore of all Human Reason.

\* Gal. ii. 20.

† 1 Pet. i. 8.

|| 1 Cor. iv. 2.

‡ Gal. iv. 14.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4.

AND elsewhere he accounts all Things as *Loss* in Comparison of the transcendent Gain of the *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus* \*. For the incomparable Excellency of it consists in making wise unto Salvation, by *first* discovering and enlightning the right Ends, and likewise the only true Means, of that true Religion of Man, that is acceptable to God ; and *secondly* directing how to apply the Means for the accomplishing the End. A Man may be knowing in the End, and also in the Means, but he is *wise* as to neither of them, nor has any Title to the Character of Wisdom (which is constantly the complex Idea of a moral Agent applying the proper Means to the End he has pitch'd upon, suppose his own Happiness in this Life, and the next) till he has accordingly begun and persevered to apply the Means agreeable to their Nature and Design, to the Furtherance of that chosen End. And this is the Business and the very Affair of this admirable Faith with Mankind ; which is therefore said to *abound to us ward in all WISDOM and PRUDENCE* † : This is the Divine Glory and Guidance, invaluable Comfort and Assurance of the *Light*, the *Way*, and the *Truth* that came into the World to lead Men to Heaven and Happiness.

THIS Belief, *tam necessitate Medii quam Præcepti*, is, without Controversy, the leading, animating Article, and most concerning Truth of the Gospel (supposing the Belief of a God) the Corner-Stone whereon we build our Name and Discipleship, and the Reason of the thence re-

\* 1 *Phil.* iii. 8.

† *Eph.* i. 8.

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THERE are two most dangerous and degenerate Extremes relating to this most amiable and beneficial Faith. One is of those, who place all Religion in the End, without any, or without sufficient Regard to the appointed Means, thinking there is no Religion, Necessity, or very little Use of them.

THE other is of those, who either place all, or the most of their Christianity in resting in, with a Judgment and Zeal confin'd to the Means, without any; or without due Reference to the End they were purposely ordain'd to produce; foolishly rating and esteeming them more necessary and valuable than the End they were subservient to. This Extreme produces great Variety of Errors and Mistakes, more or less,

\* *Matth. xii. 33.*

† *2 Jude 12.*

injurious to the Christian Life. One makes a good Foundation to be the whole Building, without superstrucing what is required upon it; the other builds without a Foundation. The latter over-values and mistakes the Design of Faith, making the Means separate from the End to be *all* the Yoke of Christ; the former undervalues and supercedes it, by placing *all* in the End independent of the other. And therefore one and the other are manifest Deviations from the true Christian Religion; which is therefore true, because it requires them *both*, and hath connected the Means to the End, and commanded one for the furtherance of the other. And each of them are a notorious putting asunder what God and Christ, his Gospel and the Reason of Things have join'd together in great Wisdom and Prudence.

My present Concern is with the first Extreme. And for the Conviction of those, who retain such pernicious Opinions, I propose to shew the Religion and Necessity of *this Faith*, in order to incite Endeavours for good Works in the Performance of the Religion of the End; and to point the Way how to gain Acceptance with God for such Endeavours, that Way, as have been hitherto form'd independent, or rather in contempt of that Faith. The NECESSITY of which Faith I would be always understood to mean, as confin'd to those Places where the Gospel is sufficiently *promulged* to those who are to act upon it. This I shall do, after I have first answered the remaining Objections of the Rejecters and Undervaluers of this Faith.

I HAVE



I HAVE already shewn, in proper Place, the Wisdom and the Love of God in appointing a Mediator, and his great Love and Condescension in offering himself, and coming into the World ; and that the Basis of this Mediatorship (since it is revealed) is, to the Admiration of all intelligent Beings in the World, solidly and most effectually built in *the Nature of Things*, by the personal Union of the Divine, and Human Nature ; for impartially consulting the Interest of each, and making a perfect Reconciliation between God and Man ; by giving the World a new Transcript of the Divine Will, after it had been obliterated and neglected, stamping it with the Authority of God, and facilitating the conveying it, by degrees, into the Hands of every body ; by dying for the Sins of Men ; and interceding for their Pardon and for all Blessings, upon Newness of Life. I have set forth the Profusion of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in the Death of the Mediator, and shewn the Weakness of the Exceptions to that Method of God's pardoning and saving Sinners. And likewise the true Use, and Design of Baptism, and the Lord's-Supper, the *two Positives*, as they are called, of Christianity ; That one is a fœderal Initiation and Engagement, to have always a faithful Regard both to the Religion of the Means, and of the End, and to apply one to the Promotion of the other ; and the other Sacrament is a frequent invigorating Recruit of the otherwise languishing Dispositions and Resolutions of the Mind, towards each of them. And in answering the Objections, I clear'd the Divine Appointment from the Imputation of Arbitrariness and mere Will, which vanishes as soon as the

the

the religious Use and Tendency appears. I have likewise made it appear, that all Parts of Human Nature are consulted and assisted in their moral Disorders by the healing Methods of the great Physician of Souls ; the Understanding, Will, Memory, and Affections by the *internal Aids*, prospering and giving Increase to the Application of the *Helps* and *Instruments* to those Powers, in publick Worship. And as bodily Affections after false Happiness chiefly sway and seduce the Man, I have particularly shewn their design'd Balance, and religious Controul, from the Motives of true Gain and Loss ; Happiness and Misery, the Rewards and Punishments of a future Life, in the Re-union of both Parts of our Nature, Body and Soul ; and that the affected Neglect of future Rewards in the Authors I have been answering, is an artificial, real Subversion of Natural Religion as well as Revealed.

THERE remain some Objections, which I proceed to consider. 1. Is of *Mystery* ; which the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* treats as an *Inconsistency, errant Jumble\**, *Orthodox Paradoxes†*, *absurd, contradictory‖*, *sacred Nonsense*—— “ to “ suppose it dark and mysterious in *any Part*, is “ to represent it as unworthy of having God for its Author ‡.

### I. Of the Mystery of Faith.

ALL those spiteful Accusations of the Rejecters and Diminishers of the Christian Faith will soon vanish, if such Readers, to whom this Answer is address'd, will be so fair as to look

\* Pag. 74. † Pag. 183. ‖ Pag. 198. ‡ Pag. 199.  
into

into the New Testament, they will plainly see their own Mistakes, and as plainly find that Christianity is, in itself, entirely clear of those Imputations ; and that they ought to ask God's, and all Christian People's Pardon for such unjust Calumny. And, because this reviling is so very frequent, and injurious to the true Purport and Design of the *real* Mystery, I shall endeavour in the Spirit of Meekness to convince them of it. It will be requisite in the first Place to give the plain Sense and Importance of the Word as it occurs in the Scripture, (1.) In all the particular Passages : (2.) In the general Meaning and Idea resulting from them.

FIRST, it occurs and is applied to various Things, twenty-six times, in the Singular, or Plural Number. To the Delivery of Doctrine in Parables ; whence the Teachable might learn enough, whilst the Incurable were taught in a manner they deserv'd, and was at the same time least prejudicial to the Publisher\*. To Types and Symbols †. To Iniquity || : Even in St. Paul's Days some began to corrupt the Gospel, and shew themselves, *in part*, Perverters of its Design of Godliness, unto Iniquity. To some particular Doctrine of the Gospel, explain'd only *in part* ; as the Resurrection of the Body ‡ ; the Manifestation of the Son of God in the Flesh † ; the Calling and Conversion of the *Jews*, when the Fulness of the Gentiles is come in §. To the speaking Things in an unknown Tongue || || ; which was, contrary to the Design of the Gospel,

\* *Matth.* xiii. 11. *Mark* iv. 11. *Luke* viii. 10. † *Eph.* v. 32. *Rev.* 1. 20. & *alibi.* || *Thef.* ii. 7. ‡ *1 Cor.* xv. 51. † *1 Tim.* iii. 16. § *Rom.* xi. 25. || || *1 Cor.* xiv. 2.

concealing them utterly and totally. To the CHAP.  
Doctrines of Christianity in general †. XVIII.

IN many Places it imports the Revelation of the Gospel and Preaching of Christ (whereon all the other Mysteries of Christianity depend) as a Thing *before* secret, unknown, and hid, but afterwards revealed and made manifest to Gentiles, as well as Jews. *According to the Revelation of the Mystery which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets according to the Commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all Nations for the Obedience of the Faith\*.* We speak the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom which God ordained before the World †. In whom [the Beloved, Jesus Christ] we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence, having made known unto us the Mystery of his Will according to his good Pleasure ||. By Revelation he made known unto me the Mystery (as I wrote afore in few Words, [recited from chap. i. 7, 8, 9. just before] whereby when ye read ye may understand MY KNOWLEDGE in the Mystery of Christ, [i. e. Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Mystery of God's Will in Christ, chap. i. 7—9.] which in other Ages was not made known unto the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be Fellow-heirs ‡ to make all Men SEE, φωτίσαι πάντας, illuminate ALL, a Word also

† 1 Cor. iv. 1. — xiii. 2. 1 Tim. iii. 9. \* Rom. xvi.  
25, 26. † 1 Cor. xi. 7. || Eph. i. 7, 8.  
‡ ——— iii. 3, 4, 5, 6.



CHAP. often used to express Baptism (*vid. Suicer.*  
 XVIII. *Thesaur.*) *what is the Fellowship*, [or with some  
 Copies *δικονομία* Dispensation] *of the Mystery*,  
*which from the beginning of the World hath been*  
*hid in God* \*. *That utterance may be given unto*  
*me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to MAKE*  
*KNOWN thy Mystery of the Gospel* †. *To ful-*  
*fil the Word of God, even the Mystery which*  
*hath been hid from Ages and from Generations, but*  
*now is made MANIFEST to his Saints: To whom*  
*God would make known what is the Riches of the*  
*Glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles; which*  
*is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory* ‖. *That their*  
*Hearts might be comforted, being knit together in*  
*love, and unto all Riches of the FULL ASSU-*  
*RANCE of understanding to the Acknowledgement*  
*of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of*  
*Christ; in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wis-*  
*dom and Knowledge* ‡, *praying that God would open*  
*unto us a Door of Utterance, to speak the Mystery*  
*of Christ* — *That I may make it manifest, as I*  
*OUGHT to speak* §.

THE Author of *Wisd.* (vi. 22.) gives an Idea  
 of Mystery, as a Thing not hid, but disclosed,  
 so far as the Truth is requisite: *As for Wisdom*  
*what she is, and how she came, I will tell you,*  
*and will not hide Mysteries from you: But will*  
*seek her out from the beginning of her Nativity, and*  
*bring the Knowledge of her into light, and will not*  
*pass over Truth.* And a judicious Author † has  
 these Words to the Purpose; “ The Mysteries  
 “ of Religion were the Secrets of his [God’s]  
 “ Will before they were revealed, but after

\* — Ver. 9. † — vi. 19.  
 25—28. ‡ — xi. 2. 3.  
 † *Witchcot. Sermon.* Vol. IV. pag. 306, 7.

‖ *Col. i.*  
 § *iv. 3, 4.*

“ they

“ they are told us, they cease to be Mysteries.  
 “ And it is no more a Mystery that God (in  
 “ and through Christ) will pardon Sin to all  
 “ that repent if they have done amiss, than it  
 “ is a Mystery that Man that is rational and in-  
 “ telligent ought to live soberly, righteously,  
 “ and godly: And I do understand it as well  
 “ that I ought to repent, and believe the Gos-  
 “ pel, as I understand that I ought to love and  
 “ fear God. All Religion is now intelligible:  
 “ The moral Part of it was intelligible from  
 “ the Creation; that which is pure Revelation  
 “ by the Gospel is intelligible ever since, and  
 “ not a Mystery. Therefore we befool our-  
 “ selves to talk that Religion is not knowable  
 “ and we can’t understand it: For understand  
 “ it we may if we will; for if it is revealed,  
 “ it is made intelligible; if not intelligible,  
 “ it is not revealed.”

I HAVE produced all the Places where the Word is to be met with, excepting *Rev.* x. 7. — xvii. 5 — and 7. a Book I pretend not to understand the *whole* of, I am contented to think of it.

I. THAT it very much resembles the Nature of a Scripture-Mystery in general, *viz.* plain and intelligible, and so far good and profitable unto all, *in part*; whilst it is *partly* otherwise at present: Thus a great many practical useful Truths are interspers’d, agreeing with other Scriptures; and being compared together, both receive and give profitable Interpretation, intelligible unto Godliness: In that respect, *bles- sed is he that readeth, and they that hear, and keep those things that are written therein.*

2. As it is stiled a *Prophecy*, chap. i. 3. there begin the *δυσνόητα*, Things hard to be understood. The like St. *Peter* himself acknowledg'd of the *Prophetick* part of St. *Paul's* Epistles, relating to the End of the World: Those are the *some* Things hard to be understood in his Writings, or rather in that *Prophetick* part of them. And how should it be otherwise when *no Prophecy* is open and plain to the private Understanding or *Interpretation* of him who wrote the Words, but to the *Holy Ghost*, who inspired them to be explain'd by future Events. It may be observ'd that the great Design of it is, to represent in a Scheme, or Assemblage of Figures of *Things* rather than of Words, the mysterious untraceable Ways of the *Alpha* and *Omega* of all Things, in the Providences and Dispensations observable in the Government of the Church. But whereas it is told us by God, and must be confessed by all Men, that they are not wholly to be solv'd by us, at present, it is by so much the more proper, elegant, sublime, and instructive to represent the *unsearchable* Part of the Divine Government in *Types* and *Symbols*, equally dark and *ænigmatical*; and in that Respect, how plainly may we understand what the Vision affirms of itself? chap. xix. 9. *These are the true Sayings of God*, xxi. 5. *Write, for these Words are true and faithful*. xxii. 6.

MEAN time, that part of the Divine Œconomy, which concerns our Duty, is very clear, and no less important. As similar Causes will have similar Effects to the End of the World, and those Effects will constantly meet with Pro-

tection, or Chastisement from the supreme Head of the Church in Heaven, the Lord of all; his seven Epistles to the *seven Churches*, will be a *Memorial* to all Ages. For it is very remarkable, that the Commendations, Threatnings, and Encouragements to those Churches, *ch.* ii. and iii. turn upon and are annex'd to the Ends of Religion or Deviations from them, *viz.* the *Eight Beatitudes*, and the only true religious Means of attaining them, *viz.* Faith in Christ, under the Salutation of several Ideas of his Puissance, Name, and Character, and with much the same sort of *Rewards* or *Beatitudes* in his Hand. That those Churches, or respective Aggregates of individual Christians, *which live not up to the Light of the Gospel, shall lose it: That they shall, in due time, be visited, who corrupt it: That the Lord Jesus will come quickly, and the Time is at hand, every Day and Year, with respect to the Concern of every Individual, and as uncertain as human Life: That the Reward is to none, but be that overcometh: That the Doctrine of Balaam* (throwing stumbling Blocks and giving unavoidable Offence) and the *Seducements of Jezabel* (which lead to Superstition and Idolatry) *are to be shunn'd and repented of: That a Conceitedness in being rich in Externals of Religion, as equivalent to being rich in good Works, is the great Hypocrisy of Religion; a State of Wretchedness, Poverty, Blindness, and Nakedness: That Lukewarmness, or want of sufficient Zeal for the Religion of the End, when that is defective; or for the Religion of the Means where that is denied, or slighted, is the Ruin of the true Christian Religion and its whole Design. At all times it is very right therefore, That he that hath an Ear to hear, should hear what the*



CHAP. Spirit saith unto the Churches: And blessed is he  
 XVIII. that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this  
 Prophecy, and keep those things that are written  
 [to this purpose] therein; for the Time is at hand.  
 Supposing this to be the Design of that Pro-  
 phesy, there is no more Absurdity in calling it  
 a *Revelation* that wants to be revealed, than in  
 saying there is a Providence of God, whose  
 Ways we know not.

SECONDLY, without having Recourse to  
 various Opinions about the Etymology of the  
 Word *Mystery* \*, we may easily fix upon one  
 uniform Idea of it according to the New Testa-  
 ment, and be agreed in one certain intelligible  
 Sense, as resulting collectively from the aforesaid  
 Places, viz. a *Discovery*, or rather a certain pro-  
 fitable Parcel of a Discovery of something useful  
 from God, which was not at all, or not so fully  
 revealed, or made known BEFORE. This ade-  
 quate Notion of Scripture-Mystery being laid  
 down, it follows,

I. THAT the Mysteries of the Gospel are  
 such Discoveries and Overtures of Knowledge,  
 as the Reason of Man could never of *itself* have  
 found out. Had it not been handed down to  
 us from the Writings of the Apostles, to whom  
 the Knowledge of *Christ*, and of the *Holy Spirit*  
 was so revealed, as to have the Privilege of see-  
 ing the one, and an extraordinary Fellowship  
 with the other in working of Miracles; we  
 should never have heard whether there was any  
*Holy Ghost*, or an *only begotten Son* of that God,

\* Which may be seen by those who have the Curiosity, in  
*Suicer. Thesaur. & Voss. Etymol.*

with whom our Reason is now happily acquainted. CHAP. XVIII.  
 For none can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost; who searcheth the deep things of God, and revealeth them to us. It belong'd to God only, to constitute the *Mediator* between himself and Man; and the Revelation of him, and the things of his Kingdom, must necessarily therefore come unto Man, as it did, from Heaven. In that Sense the Mystery was certainly *above* or beyond the *Reason* of Man to have found out without an Information from above, by a Delegation from Heaven.

ALL the collective Wisdom and Prudence of the Wise and Prudent of this World, could never have found out that Abyss of God's Love and Wisdom in sending his Son into the World, for reconciling it to himself. And this very well explains *Job. vi. 44.* *No Man can come unto me except the Father draw him, i. e.* as the next ver. shews, *unless he is taught of God.* As the Words were address'd to the *Jews*, it is peculiarly true of *them*, that none will receive *Jesus* for their expected *Messiah*, unless they are first convinced out of the Old Testament, wherein they are taught of God concerning him: but it holds good in general, that none other will come to Christ as their Saviour, except they are taught of God, or drawn by the Teaching of that Spirit which reveals *Christ* in the Scriptures:— And hereby know we the Spirit of God: Every Spirit or Doctrine commanded to be tried, that confesseth that *Jesus Christ* is come in the *Flesh*, is of God, 1 *Job. iv. 2.* This Faith cometh only of bearing the Word of God; not the natural, but the spiritual Man is inform'd of it, 1 *Cor. ii. 14.* *i. e.* one who receiveth the Revelation of the

CHAP. *Spirit.* By comparing Scripture with Scripture,  
 XVIII. the *Jew* might arrive at the true Knowledge of  
 their *Messiah*; but the *Greek* had no taste left  
 but for his modish Wisdom, whatever presented  
 itself, not having the current Stamp, was scorn'd  
 as Foolishness, and disrelish'd as babling: depend-  
 ing wholly upon his *natural* Reason, Philosophi-  
 cal Deductions, and vain Philosophy, he *cannot*  
 possibly *know them* that way, before Revelation  
 discovers them; they are *spiritually discern'd*,  
 knowable only by Revelation from the Spirit;  
 nor can he receive them, as long as he rejects  
 that way of knowing: But admit that way of  
 Knowledge, his natural Reason plainly discerns  
 them, the Case is alter'd, and the natural Man  
 becomes a spiritual Man.

THE Mysteries of the Heathen Superstition  
 were dark Frauds and Artifices of certain Con-  
 federates carrying on Imposture for wicked Ends;  
 often placing Devotion in Impurity behind the  
 Scenes, and therefore swearing the *Initiated* to  
*Secrecy*, but always holding it unlawful to give  
 the *profane* common Worshippers any written  
 Knowledge of their Mysteries; thus it was  
 among the ancient *Druids*, once the Oracles of  
 this Kingdom \*. But those of our holy Religion  
 all tend to Holiness and Purity, and are *written*

\* *Non fas esse existimant ea, quæ de sacris docent, literis mandare.* Cæf. de Bell. Gall. Lib. 6. That the Heathen Mysteries were filed *ἁγρόφρητα μυστήρια*, full of detestable Iniquity, *vid. Whitb. Eph. v. 12.* Cicero was both *Philosopher*, and *Priest*, and he joins both together in saying, *Illum quasi parentem hujus universitatis invenire difficile: Et cum inveneris, indicare in vulgus nefas.* Lib. de Univers. pag. 2. 'Twas hard to discover the true God, the Parent of the Universe, and if you should discover him, 'twould be unlawful to apprise the common People of him.

for the Information and Edification of *all*; because it is generally necessary for all to understand plainly the principal Truths they import. And so much, in Fact, is disclosed to *common* Apprehensions, as is of best Use to their Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, for Pardon of Sin, and Access to worship God through his Mediation; holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience and the practice of all good Works.

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II. THE Mysteries of the Gospel, the *eternal Purpose* (*Eph. iii. 11.*) *eternal Covenant*, (*Heb. xiii. 20.*) were *gradually* revealed and unfolded from Faith to Faith. The Series of *τῶν αἰώνων*, *Ages and Generations* may be reduced to three, 1. Wherein a Saviour was *promised* from the beginning, upon the first Occasion, to *FALLEN Adam*, *The Seed of the Woman shall break*, &c. and again renewed to *Abraham*, that in *his Seed all Nations should be blessed*. Faith in this *Promise* saved, and was in force till Faith in the actual Performance of it; and that Promise was the latent Gospel of the old World, and of the *Mosaic* Dispensation. When 2. It was further typified and painted out (*in claro-obscur*) by Sacrifices, and Rites: The Old Testament being as the *Moon* shining, by the Light of the unseen *Sun*. 3. When the *Sun of Righteousness* actually arose, the *Messiah*, called the *last Age*, Days, &c. Hence it appears that true *Salvation*, *i. e.* Remission of Sins through the *one* Mediator, whom God ordain'd, is in Substance and Efficacy one and the same saving Truth from the Beginning of the World to the End thereof; from *fallen Adam* to the last Man; only the Knowledge thereof is more explicite at some time,



CHAP. XVIII. than others; and to some People and Nations, above others. The Revelation in its last Perfection was according to *Joh. i. 16. Grace for Grace, or Favour unto Favour; the Law of Moses a Shadow of good things to come, being Favour under a Veil; to uncover which came the valuable Favour and open Mercy of most gracious Truth by Jesus Christ, properly meriting the Name of the Grace of God, (Tit. ii. 11.)*

A DISCOVERY by Degrees, till the Effusion of the Holy Ghost after Christ's Ascension, has all along been the Œconomy of God. The Patriarchs and Profits saw comparatively to what the Apostle saw, and we have read, but thro' a Glass darkly; yet with their less Knowledge were, nevertheless, holy Men. Whence it may be inferr'd, that a general Conception, or obscure confused Notion of the saving Mysteries of Faith, is in some Cases a saving Knowledge; at least, when and where farther Degrees of a distinct Understanding is not attainable, with respect to the Capacities, and Opportunities of several People. Tho' the Evangelical Mysteries are revealed, and in that Respect so far as they are so, not hid to some Part of the World, they notwithstanding retain the Vulgar Acception of the Word, *i. e. unintelligible* to a great Part of it; so much of it as the Gospel has yet to instruct concerning those Truths. But blessed are our Eyes, for we see, &c. —

III. IT is to be observed, that the MYSTERY of God and the Father, or God the Father, and of Christ — of Christ — of the Gospel — the Riches of Christ (*Eph. iii. 8.*) — of the Glory of this Mystery — of full Assurance

Affurance of Understanding — all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge — the Riches of his Grace wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence — the Mystery of his Will — and St. *Paul's own* Knowledge of that Mystery display'd unto others, all consist, if we will let the Apostle explain himself, (*Eph. iii. 3—7. compared with ch. i. 7, 8, 9.*) in the Knowledge of the *Redemption* we have thro' his [Christ's] *Blood*, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS; revealed to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. Other Scriptures make the Notion of the Name *Jesus*, i. e. *Saviour* and *Redeemer*, to consist in *saving his People from their Sins*, and the Knowledge of Salvation [from Enemies, the Devil and his Works] to his People, to be in, by, or for the *Remission of their Sins* †. And consequently the Salvation, which the *Scripture is able to make wise unto*, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus ‡, and the Salvation, which is the END of our Faith ||, in the Mystery of Christ, and the Gospel, are the same thing with the *Forgiveness of Sin*; the Revelation, Knowledge, or Mystery of one, is the Revelation, Knowledge, or Mystery of the other. This is the *prime* Fundamental of our Knowledge therein, therefore called the Word §, the Gospel †, the Way \*\*, of Salvation, *New Testament*, or *Covenant*; wherein God will, upon that Faith, Repentance, and Amendment, remember Sin and Iniquity no more; declar'd also to be the very Way of *knowing* the

† *Luke i. 77.*

‡ *2 Tim. iii. 15.*

|| *1 Pet. i. 9.*

§ *Acts xiii. 26.*

†. *Eph. i. 13.*

\*\* *Acts xvi. 17.* which explains those Expressions, *any of this Way*, *ch. ix. 2.* speak evil of *that Way* — no small stir about *that Way*, *ch. xix. 9, 23* — *after the Way* which they call, &c. *ch. vi. 14.*

CHAP. Lord from the least to the greatest, (Jer. xxxi. 34.)  
 XVIII. glad Tidings to all People; the Peace of God,  
 preaching Peace by Jesus Christ; being saved,  
 justified finally; Joy, Eternal Life, &c.

MAKING known what is the Riches of the Glory of this Mystery, *that our Hearts may be comforted*; and when Words fail of extolling the great Riches of that Grace, we are to abound therein with *Thanksgiving* \*. Let the Peace of God rule † in our Hearts, *i. e.* according to the Force of the Original, moderate and decide Controversies; to the which Peace we are *called*, but not to doubtful Disputation in our Knowledge of Christ. That Love of Christ *passeth Knowledge, i. e.* excelleth, *surpasseth*, according to the Original, all *other* Knowledge; and that Peace of God in like manner, *passeth* all *other* Understanding or Science, being a Peace which the World cannot give.

AND because we may so well understand that Divine Science, the Powers of *that Faculty* (*Simplex Apprehensio, Judicium, Discursus*) improving in *that part* of the Mystery, according to what is commanded, are said to be most profitably filled with the *Fulness of the Knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling the World to himself*, which is the Glory and Perfection of our Knowledge of them: Especially when they take into Consideration the *Fulness of the Godhead* dwelling in him bodily || for making him a complete Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for us; and that *Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ* to

\* Col. i. 27. ii. 2, 7. iii. 15.  
 || Col. ii. 9.

† Rom. xiv. 1.

which

which they may grow and improve, and make a *perfect* Man in the Knowledge of that Mystery. The Love of God in sending his Son into the World, and the Love and Humiliation of the Son taking our Nature upon him, and by his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension perfecting our Peace and Reconciliation, is the wondrous Disclosure of the Mystery of Godliness, the Fountain of all Mercy and Pardon, Means of Grace and Hopes of Glory, the exciting Principle of Repentance and Prayer, and a perpetual Fund of Obedience, Thanksgiving, and Adoration.

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WOULD we be inform'd wherein he hath *abounded* towards us in *all* Wisdom and Prudence of the Mystery? It consists in the *Redemption we have through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace* \*. Or would we be contented with *St. Paul's own* Knowledge of the Matter? he declares it to consist in the same †; and confines himself to that Point ‖; and calls his writing of it, the *speaking the Wisdom of God in a Mystery* ‡. Would we know the great Article of Faith to which he would have all the Nations *obedient*, to whom the Mystery, the Preaching of Jesus Christ is made manifest by the Scriptures §; he acquaints us in the beginning of that *Ep.* † that it is, *concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David according to the Flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness by the Resurrection from the Dead.*

\* *Eph.* i. 7, 8.  
*ch.* i. 7, 8.

† — *iii.* 3, 4, compared with

‖ *1 Cor.* ii. 2.

‡ — *Ver.* 7.

§ *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26.

† *Ch.* i. 3, 4, 5.



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To the making known *this* Gospel of God, and of Christ, he declares himself made an Apostle; and that it is the Power of God unto Salvation to all that believe \*. The Son of God taking our Flesh, dying for our Sins, and rising again for our Justification, being the Summary of the Gospel; and the Proof of that Mystery of Christ, as to both Parts of his Divine and Human Nature, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, he wisely reduces moreover to a prov'd *Matter of Fact*, to prevent all Philosophical Speculation about his being the Son of God. For as he was Son of Man *κατὰ σάρκα ἐν σπέρματι Δαβὶδ*, by taking our Flesh, (and dying) so was it *Matter of Fact*, that he was *Son of God* also *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης*, by the Resurrection from the Dead: There was the Power of the Proof of it, sufficient for any Christian, that the *Holy* one who saw no Corruption was the Son of God. All the after Miracles were wrought in the Name of *Christ risen*, and to attest that Truth; and what Truth, what Fact was ever so well attested by History? For he not only wrought many Miracles by his *own* Power, and in his own Name (doing others, sometimes as *the* Prophet, the *Sent* of God, anointed with the Holy Ghost and with Power) the Abundance of which St. *John*, in the Close of his Gospel, makes a Case of *Record*, that *he was the Son of God*. But the Miracle of all was, his raising *himself* from the Dead, as he asserts of his own Power to do, Demonstration of Omnipotence! Therefore doubtless the Son of God.

\* Rom. i. 16.

WOULD we lastly know, what the Apostle calls a *great Mystery*, (and then we shall have gone through *all* the Scriptures, where *Mystery* is mentioned in reference to Christ, or his Divinity) there are but two Places, *Eph. v. 32.* *1 Tim. iii. 16.* And if all the other Passages apply *Mystery* to practical Purposes and not to Theories, even those Places where *great* is superadded to *Mystery*, will be found still more in the same Design. *Eph. v. 32.* The Spirit of Revelation condescends to apply the Union between the Husband and Wife to illustrate the intimate Love and Relation between Christ and his Church; but especially that Instance of it in the preceding Verse, *For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father, &c. and cleave to, &c. This is a great Mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.* That is, as the Man leaves his Father, &c. so Christ left, as it were, his Father to be joined to his Church: Prodigious Love, and Condescension! And what better Argument for our Love, and Submission to him?

*1 Tim. iii. 16.* And without Controversy, great is the *Mystery of Godliness*: God was manifest in the *Flesh*, &c. The Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour is worthily called a *great Mystery*, inasmuch as the real Divinity and Humanity of Christ, as *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, is the great Point and Corner-Stone of Christianity. The Creed commonly call'd *Athanasian*, says nothing but the Truth, a Truth worth all the rest; "The right Faith is this, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, is God and Man." But how much is it our Prudence to observe further,  
for

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for what End is it divulg'd? to what Uses appointed? and what sort of Mystery described? Not a Speculative, not a Notional one, devised for Disputation; but a truly quiet, religious, practical, and exceeding wise one; improveable to *Godliness* only, that is the Conduct of the Mystery, that is its very Proposal, that is the whole of its express'd Contents, whenever we are so wise as to lay aside vain Philosophy; tho' we know and believe, or think we know and believe many things concerning it, we know them all amiss, if our Knowledge does not confine itself to this Point. The inconceivable Part, the perpetual Theme of Controversy, is *not* the Mystery of Godliness, but that which is intelligible and matter of Fact, plainly set down, *God manifested in the Flesh*: The Sum of that and the Scope of the Particulars following *justified in the Spirit, &c.* is GODLINESS; that is the great Aim of this *great* Mystery; confirm'd by and confined to the Necessity of *holding the Mystery of that Faith in a pure Conscience* towards God and Man: next to the Being of God, the Apostle would have it accounted the most certain Thing in the World; and to be so confessedly plain, as to be without any Controversy among Christians. And it is the more observable, that this great Apostle, who was favour'd with the last Knowledge and Discovery from the *Lord Jesus* himself, concerning the Mystery of himself, in his Directions to *Timothy*, should fix and ascertain the precise Meaning, single View, and entire Purpose of it, to *Godliness*, and a *pure Conscience*: To certain Godliness, not to doubtful Disputation; to Godliness and Honesty, tending to heavenly Felicity, not worldly Wrangling. This is the worthy Subject

Subject of reasonable Christian Faith, because it is the Object of Reason, as well as Faith, ever since Scripture has revealed it to Reason. CHAP. XVIII.

IV. LET it especially be observed, that the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, notwithstanding they are *revealed*, are revealed but IN PART. The Part that is indeed revealed or made known to its proper Faculty, the Understanding, is so far now not a Secret; but a most edifying Ground, and the substantiallest Reason for Piety and Virtue, that ever was exhibited to the World. And so far as it is discover'd, is become a Matter of common Knowledge, and firm Assent of the understanding Faculty, which is, in a great Measure, the true Import of Faith in Scripture. There is the bright, and there is the shady Side of the Mystery, the *τὸ ῥητὸν*, and the *τὸ ἄρρητον*; one the sublunary usu-fructuary Part for the present Occasion of bringing us to Heaven; the other the distant, dark, imperious Side reserv'd to another State; to which we assent in the general Method of giving Credit to God, that whatever he certainly speaks of his own Nature, is certainly true, and may be useful to us hereafter by a more perfect Disclosure, in the Vision of God; a Vision that is the Christian's reversionary Knowledge and Fruition of Mystery. Had no part been disclosed, there had been no Notion at all engendred; but enough is open'd to kindle Desire, and stir up human Endeavour, and completely do the Business of a *Notion in part*; which, in Truth, is all the Notion that we Men, who are Notion-guided Creatures, have either of Things Natural, or Reveal'd.



I. As to Things reveal'd, the Apostles themselves writing in the true Sublime, or most intelligible Character, that belongs to such Things as they respect us at present, confess, that they *knew but IN PART* and *prophefied* (i. e. instruct others, as Prophecy often signifies in Scripture, and especially in that Scripture, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. *Covet earnestly the best Gifts, but rather that ye prophefy, i. e. teach*; which is the standing, the useful, and most edifying Talent unto others) *IN PART*: Assigning the Reason from the Constitution of Things according to the Will of God; *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10. And if the very Secretaries and Amanuenses of those Celestial Discoveries speaking of Mysteries and Knowledge, spake so of themselves, at the time they were inspired with the Holy Ghost, who led them into *all* Truth, how much more Reason have we to acquiesce in *a partial* Apprehension, and deem it sufficiently profitable for us? The Understanding *in part*, which is the Measure of our Faith and the Portion allotted to us at present, is a very contentable Knowledge; there is enough and to spare for our real Service, and its Views upon us; and what shou'd we do with more than enough, or why desire it? And the Excellency of it is, that it is very obvious, and very fruitful. Whilst arduous Speculations soaring in Theory, and in lofty Clouds, and like the aqueous Drops of Rain, boyant and floating there, of no use at all to us, till they descend to water the Capacity of common Fruitfulness. If the great and eloquent Apostle wou'd rather speak *five Words* to the Churches of God, concerning

cerning things whereby we must be saved, *with the Understanding*, and to the Understanding, that *he might teach others also*; *than ten thousand Words in an unknown Tongue*; is it not better for us Readers, and Students of his Words, to measure the Meaning by the profess'd Design, which is to *profit* withal? And to receive such as worthy of all Acceptation, concerning the Points of Salvation, as give us an Understanding of the Matter, by arguing plainly what is our Interest and Concern therein, and the Manner how we are to profit withal? and to prefer such before ten thousand Volumes of intricate Disputation, which are all, with respect to the Business of profiting, to almost all People, in an unknown Tongue, tho' wrote in that wherein they were born.

“ THERE was none of the Doctrines of our  
“ Saviour calculated for the Gratification of  
“ Mens idle Curiosity, the busying and amusing  
“ them with airy and useleſs Speculations; much  
“ leſs were they intended for an Exercise of  
“ Credulity, or a Trial how far we could bring  
“ our Reason to ſubmit to Faith: But, as on  
“ the one Hand they were plain and ſimple,  
“ and ſuch as by their Agreeableneſs to the ra-  
“ tional Faculties of Mankind, did highly re-  
“ commend themſelves to our Belief; ſo on the  
“ other Hand they had an immediate Relation  
“ to Practice, and were the genuine Principles  
“ and Foundations upon which all human and  
“ divine Virtues were naturally to be ſuper-  
“ ſtructed\*.”

\*. *Archbiſhop of York's Sermon before the Queen, Chriſtmas-Day, 1704.*

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CONSIDERING the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who is perfect in all his Works, and never does things by halves, 'tis a great Presumption, or rather Demonstration, that we are either incapable of understanding that part which is kept secret, or, that it is useless for us *to be* appriz'd of it in this Life present: Better therefore lock'd up by him, who does all things for the best, whilst the useful Part is display'd and made known. And we have clear distinct Ideas, and may talk as intelligibly of that Part of the Mystery, as of any other plain thing; so that none need be at a Loss to give a Reason of the Hope that is in them.

THO' *we, who were sometime Darkness, are now Light in the Lord*, and his Revelation is put into our Hands as a Telescope for a clearer Insight into divine and heavenly Things, yet we know very well that where the Telescope shews what we could not see without it, it does not shew *all*: But still it is, as the Scripture acquaints us, *we see through a Glass darkly*. The concerning edifying Part wherein we are interested, shines bright like the Sun, and our Heart burns within us, when we cordially converse with it; whilst the other twinkles like the more distant fix'd Stars. And if an ordinary magnifying Glass can make such Discoveries here to our bodily Eyes of a new World of invisible Insects and Seeds, &c. \* (incredible if it had been written  
or

\* " By means of that excellent Instrument [*Microscope*] we have a far greater Number of different kinds of Things reveal'd to us, than were contain'd in the visible Universe before." *Hist. R. S.* pag. 384. And I would add, that  
the

or reported only, and the Invention of those magnifying Glasses had never been communicated to the World) what vast felicitating Discoveries remain in the next World, to the Spirit of Man beholding God *Face to Face*? If the Defect is in our present imperfect Faculties, it is plain, we shall never be able, in this Life, to attain the vainly aspiring Knowledge of the *Manner* how. When we arrive at higher Degrees of Knowledge, and Revelation in another World, the *Manner* will be manifest, and we shall be *Comprehenders* of the *whole* Mystery; which put us in mind to be contented, at present, to be *Apprehenders* of the Thing *in general*, and its best Use.

THE Scriptures never design'd to give Information farther than serves to qualify us in a *godly, sober, righteous* Life, in order to lead us to the Happiness to which we were ordain'd; by raising the active Faculties of our Understanding and Will, of our Love, Hope, Fear, to the securing our Obedience to him, from the affecting Consideration of the Interest we have in his most gracious Transactions with us; not by Exhibitions of his *Essence, Substance, &c.* things above our Comprehension in this Life; but of his great Goodness in creating, redeeming, preserving us; his Power, his Dominion, his Wisdom as a Governor, his Legislature over our Thoughts, Words and Actions, his present Inspection over, and future Account in judging us: all which we understand to an Accuracy, and

the Grandeur and Almightiness of the Skill of the Divine Architect, is no less seen in those invisible Myriads, than in the grosser Objects of his framing.



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are as much agreed in, as in the Truth of our own Existence. The saving edifying Part of the Mystery, the faithful Saying that directs our Faith to its Use, and is worthy of all Acceptation, *That Christ the only begotten Son of God came into the World to save Sinners*, is revealed and made plain even to *Babes*, the most inferior Understandings.

SUCH is the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ; and on that account as well as others, *has God abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence*: mean time the speculative Part subject to Disputation and intricate Distinctions, is still *hid from the Wise and Prudent*, as to Harmony and Agreement about it. The Abstract Intelligence of the Divine Being is exalted far above our Capacity, whilst that which is derivable from his Government over, his Love and Mercy towards us, certain in their Effects, and therefore plain in their Causes, is very nigh to us, and we collect them from the Works of his Hands, from continual Benefits, from the salutary Concerns that have been negotiated, and are still negotiating between God and us: What the *Father* hath done, what the *Son*, what the *Holy Ghost* have done, and still do for us, all co-operating in the Restoration and Salvation of Mankind; to honour the Father for what he has done; to honour the Son likewise for what he has done, and is to do in the Day of Judgment; and to do no despite to the Spirit of Grace; is exceeding plain. And it is no less plain, that it ought to be consider'd by us chiefly in that Aspect and Relation; what Returns of Duty are becoming, what Behaviour is required of us, as we are peculiarly initiated into

into a lively Faith in their Names, Characters and Offices, by that holy Baptism which distinguishes the Christian from the rest of the World.

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THOSE external Relations to us of Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, more import us, than the internal Relations among themselves. That good Knowledge does certainly concern us as a Duty, as it is evidently foodful in its Ideas to the Christian Life, fully satisfies the Understanding, mightily ingratiates and obliges the Will, highly raises the Affections of the Soul, and actuates the religious Powers of the whole Man to an universal Obedience. The *unmanifested* part of the Mystery is the hypothetical and schematical part of believing; take you the Shell, give me the Kernel!—whilst the *manifested* part of it is *God with us*, to all Purposes of Godliness and Holiness, Wisdom and Goodness, Peace and Joy in believing, the very Propriety and End of Mystery, and the true Institution of its Doctrine; declared to be *manifested* to take away our Sins—to destroy the Works of the Devil—to expect Reconciliation with God; Resurrection to eternal Life; to look for Remission of Sins; Answer to our Prayers; and Assistance of his Spirit; in the *NAME* of Jesus Christ our *Mediator* and Redeemer. Keeping to these undoubted great Benefits, easy Practice, and plainly declared Purpose of this Mystery, it deserves the Name *great*; worthy in itself and of its great Author: This is setting forward the Salvation of *all* Men; this is obvious to the meanest Capacities. The Laws relating to these saving Uses, are therefore binding to all, because they are so plain to all; and the Transgression must be Sin.

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As the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, the One Mediator between God and Man, is the Consummation of divine Wisdom, Power, Righteousness, and Godliness for the Redemption of the World, full of the best Influence for Reconciliation and Goodness, Peace and good Works, and is positively, plainly, and abundantly revealed; how happy had it been, if Christians had always kept to the plain Words of Revelation, without diminishing what is written, or abounding in vain Imaginations above what is written, thro' luxuriant Conjectures and Philosophical Speculations never once able to convert the World to Righteousness? The Churches of God had never known so much Distraction and Violence, nor the History of it been stain'd with the Names of so many Heresies, Sects and Divisions, severally setting up to *make* Christ their Saviour, after their own conceited Manner, different from what God has made and presented him, who would therefore have the Gift (a most reasonable thing) accepted just as he gives it, without Alteration or Amendment.

THE *Carpocratians*, *Cerintbians*, *Ebionites*, and *Gnostics* made him the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, like all other Men: That *Christ* descended upon *Jesus* in the Shape of a Dove after his Baptism, and in the End flew away again from *Jesus*, who suffer'd and rose again, but Christ continued impassible, as being of a spiritual Nature. From them the *Docetæ* set up the *Apparition*, to the Denial of the Reality of his Human Nature, as the *Valentinians*, &c. The Followers of *Paulus Samosetanus*, with the *Socinians*, wholly reject

reject his *Divine*, as Son of God, and constitute him entirely of an Human Nature. The *Sabelians* or *Patripassians* incarnate God the *Father*, instead of God the Son. The *Arians*, whilst they allow, diminish both the Natures of Christ; his *Divine*, by asserting *there was a Time when he was not*; his *Human*, by substituting the *λόγος* in lieu of the rational Soul. The *Apollinarians* deny'd his rational, whilst they allow'd him a sensitive Soul. The *Nestorians* held a slender, *extrinsic*, imperfect Union of the Divine and Human Nature, or Substance; whilst the *Eutychians* maintained in Opposition, that before the Union there were two, but after it no more than one Nature.

THE two last quarrel'd bitterly about the *Manner* of the Union, which neither of them understood; and the less they understood, the more they were enraged against one another; and as there was no Hopes of converting, they call'd in Blows and the Secular Arm to devour one another; which finish'd the Catastrophe of the *Eastern Churches*: But, that they might each be equally punish'd, the Secular Arm of *Mahomet* enslav'd them both without Distinction, and imposed the heavy Yoke of *oppressive Tribute*, ever since upon all their poor shatter'd Churches. So miserably have *Hereticks* in all Ages mangled and divided *Christ Jesus* into Parts and Parcels, Bits and Pieces; in direct Contradiction to the fundamental Truth of his being *perfect God*, and *perfect Man*, and so a perfect Mediator between both. What, alas! can be a greater Crime or worse Sense of *Heresy*, than for the wanton Wit of Man to go about to *put asunder* that, for the Confusion and Devastation of Mankind,



CHAP. which God has join'd together for their general  
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FAR be it from God, who does Right to all his sincere Worshippers and the Faculties of all his Servants, to expect us to believe, *i. e.* understand, the Part that is abstruse, to which our Mind has very difficult, if any Access, with the same Affection, Zeal, and fruitful Improvement, as what we do apprehend, perceiving our Relation to it, and its Influence over us: To bid us see what he has cover'd with a Veil, that be far from God. — If it is in a Manner morally impossible for the *Generality* either to know the several Schemes and Hypotheses of Disputers, or make any Judgment of those abstruse Points when known; that sort of Knowledge could never be intended as generally fundamental, nor required of God as necessary to Salvation; not by him certainly, who never commands any thing impossible; not by that Divine Wisdom, which is no Respector of Parts or Persons, and never wanted condescending Goodness, or intelligible Expressions to discover every thing necessary so clearly, or rather so much the more plainly to all, as it was necessary and fundamental for all to know; the better to work in every Soul the subsequent End, Practice, the ultimate Issue for which we shall all be judged. And to keep our Understandings to their proper, profiting Measure of Faith, the Apostle encourages us to enlarge, range, and satiate our Minds, not in the abstract Theory of God, or Christ, not in the Abyss of his Nature, but of his *Love*: That is infinite, and no Comprehension required of it; this is likewise infinite, yet we are bid to comprehend it; because it is so much

much our Interest and Advantage to be drawn to God by an Attraction as strong as infinite; and because we are to take measure of it in our Contemplation, there are Dimensions given to it, *Breadth, Length, Depth, and Height*; that being fill'd therewith, we may be fill'd, as it is express'd, *with all the Fulness of God*.

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“IT is true indeed, says the present worthy Dean of Christ-Church, any Pains taken in fixing the *Meaning of the Words*; in stating the *Doctrines*; or freeing them from the Charge of *Contradiction*, will be usefully employ'd: Because whatever Doctrines have been deliver'd by God, he hath given withal sufficient Means of rightly understanding them: And it is our Duty to use our best Endeavours both to understand them rightly, and to clear them from such Objections as may be urged against them. But to proceed farther than this; to frame *Hypotheses* by which to solve Difficulties by us *insolvable*, and to explain things by us *inexplicable*, is (to use the softest Expression) a very extraordinary Proceeding.” *Mysteries of the Christ. Rel. Sermon at Oxford*, pag. 23.

THE Author of *Characteristicks*, “without the least Difficulty allows of *Mystery* in the *Honestum* and *Pulchrum* \*.” Why not in this, which transcends all his *Beautifuls*?

2. NOT only in Scripture, but in Nature, how uniform is God, who has given us all things appertaining to *Life and Godliness*, πάντα πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν, in his Dispensations of Know-

\* *Characterist.* Vol. III. pag. 182.

ledge?

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ledge? As in the former he reveals in part, and reserves in part; so he discovers and obscures in part, in the latter; “concealing from the Mind of Man any other Knowledge even of such familiar things, but what concerns the Ways of using them; and the Sciences which are design’d for the Knowledge of their Nature, discover nothing in them but what is of use to us, and we find all things wrapt up in so much the greater Darkness, the more we endeavour to penetrate into their Nature beyond what is useful\*.” There are Spots and dark Places to be seen in the bright shining Sun in the Firmament, upon a closer Inspection; it is therefore uniform, that there should be something obscure and unintelligible in the *Sun of Righteousness*, which enlightens the moral World. *Origen* has with great Sublimity and beauty of Thought, observ’d this Uniformity in the Revelation of the Words of God, as Author of that Revelation; as in his Works, as Author of Nature, “That he who acknowledges the Scriptures to have proceeded from him who created the World, or is the Author of Nature, may well expect to meet with the like kind of Unintelligibles, and Difficulties in them, as are to be met with in the Constitution of Nature†.”

It is plain then, that Reason and Nature is full as deficient in regard to the *Modus* and *Manner* of Things, as Revelation; and therefore no more fault to be found with one than the other: which should afford an Argument of Similitude, that both derive from the same divine Original; and that the present Defect of Know-

\* *Principles of Law in general*, pag. 6.  
*Phil.* pag. 23.

† *Orig.*

ledge,

ledge, as to the *Manner* of the Truth and Existence of Things, is perfectly and adequately necessary for confining our limited Faculties to their proper Subject, their *Hoc age*, to what verily and indeed concerns us in the one, as well as the other. Sir *Isaac Newton*, that great Secretary of Natural Knowledge, says, "We do not at all know what the *Substance* of any thing is." Light itself, (the same may be said of Knowledge if there be too much of it) if increased beyond a due Proportion to our present Organ, causes a very unserviceable Sensation. And Mr. *Locke*, "I may confidently say, that the intellectual and sensible World are in this perfectly alike. That that part which we see of either of them, holds no Proportion with what we see not; and whatsoever we can reach with our Eyes or our Thoughts of each of them, is but a Point, almost nothing in comparison of the rest." "He that knows any thing, knows this in the first place, that he need not seek long for Instances of his Ignorance\*." There is the Philosophy of Air, Fire, and Water, daily Necessaries, and absolutely so: But what is the Life of the Body concerned in this Scheme, or that? What is more obvious or better known even to the *Deist* himself, than the *Omnipresence* of God, that he is not far from any of us; that in him we live, move, and have our Being? Yet what darker, more intricate, or unprofitable of Solution, than the physical disputatious Disquisition of the same? but what plainer, more certain, or more edifying Truth in all Nature, than the *Thing* itself?

\* *Human Understanding*, B. IV. Ch. III. §. 23.



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IF this is the very Constitution of Things with respect to human Understanding, and God has set one and the same Horizon to our Knowledge of Things natural and revealed; making them partly known so far, and no farther than as they are of real use to us; and partly unknown, so far as it is otherwise: And if the innumerable acknowledg'd Mysteries of the former so far tally with the few of the latter, as that we learn one as well as the other by Degrees; and before we know the Uses of either, it may be affirmed of the Knowledge of each, that it *was hid* from us; but when known, and so far as is known, revealed, and no longer hid. Does it follow, either in Revelation, or Nature, that we know nothing, or not enough, because we don't perceive the *totum cognoscibile*, the *All* of Things? Or that some Part is not clearly understood, and good for Use, in each of them, because some other Part is occult and undiscover'd in them both?

AND seeing it is regularly true and undeniable, that Things known to us by the Light of Nature, are nevertheless in *some* respect unintelligible and inexplicable, and we are informed of them but *in part*, and yet sufficiently informed: Is it not agreeable to the common Reason of Things, and the common Measure by which Knowledge is dealt out to human Capacity, to allow of Mystery likewise in Revelation? and to confess the Divine Goodness and Wisdom in one as well as the other; *i. e.* some part undiscovered and incomprehensible, whilst another, and that the better Portion, is plainly addressed to the Assent of the Mind, conveyed

conveyed over to our spiritual Occasions, and is thereunto very sufficient, tho' a Knowledge in part ?

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IT must therefore be impious Scandal to Truth, and Offence to the God of Nature, to hear Men abuse their own Reason, in exclaiming so bitterly, as they do, against Mystery in his Revelation of divine Things. Not only *these* Men, but Mr. Bayle \* and others, are most immodestly and outrageously guilty of this witless Ridicule. Can that ever be a Proof of an elevated Understanding, or a clear Sight into Religion, which is so apparent a Demonstration of the Shallowness of one, and the Want of the other ? If Mystery and Natural Knowledge are not *Inconsistency, errant Jumble, absurd Nonsense*, opposite or *contradictory* Terms, but co-incident in the same Subject, Nature ; Why should Mystery and revealed Knowledge be ridiculed, and not admitted, in like manner, to be co-incident in the same Subject, in Holy Scripture ?

AND because this Faith is misrepresented, as if the Excellency of it consisted in believing *Impossibilities*, I proceed to shew :

## II. *The Co-idence of Faith and Knowledge, Faith and Reason, in Matters of Christian Duty.*

As Faith is the governing Principle of the Religion of the *Means*, shedding its Influence and

\* In his celebrated Dictionary almost every where ; and *three* of his four *Explanations* at the End, and in most of his Writings that I have seen.

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Efficacy upon the Performance of the Religion of the End, and sometimes stands for the whole of true Religion, Means and End (as where Salvation is ascribed to *believing*, and Faith stands for the whole Gospel) it is the obedient Persuasion or *chosen* Assent and *Inclination* of the Mind to Truths and Doctrines discovered to us by *Revelation* from Heaven, upon sufficient rational Evidence of its divine Testimony and Authority, recorded and conveyed down to us for regulating our Lives in all the Duties of Religion. And when we are firmly persuaded of that use of them, and apply them accordingly, we are said to *know* them, and have saving Faith or Knowledge; and so having the *internal* Evidence of them, in their designed Use and Application, verifies that of 1 John v. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the Witness in himself.* And thus confining our Thoughts to what we may certainly and easily know of the Mediator, from what is plainly written, and not think it advisable to depart from that Knowledge, because our limited imperfect Faculties have not enabled us to understand *all*, we shall be entitled to the Benefit of those his Declarations, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me; this is Life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent: blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.*

IN some Places of Scripture, Knowledge is differenced from Faith; as, to one is given the Word of *Knowledge*, to another *Faith* by the same Spirit.\* Tho' I understand all *Know-*

\* 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9.—xiii. 2.

ledge, and have *Faith*, so that I could remove Mountains. In which Places both Knowledge and *Faith* are the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, current in those Days. *Add to your Faith Virtue, to Virtue Knowledge.*† Where *Faith* stands for the Christian Religion, or the Assent of the Mind embracing it in general as true; and Knowledge for *Prudence* in the Conduct, as well as Proficiency in understanding those Virtues in their true Circumstances that were to be superadded, mentioned in the Sequel.

BUT in most Places *Faith* and *Knowledge*, to *believe* and *know*, are promiscuously put one for t'other. To instance a few: By this we *believe* that thou camest forth from God \*; which our Saviour repeating in the following Chapter says, They have *known* surely that I came from thee, and have believed that thou didst send me: That ye may *know* and *believe* that the Father is in me, † — *believe* and *know* the Truth: ‡ We have *known* and *believed* the Love that God hath to us. || The Reason of the Disciples being slow of Heart to *believe* all the Prophets had spoken, was their not understanding the Meaning, that they certainly related to Christ and his Sufferings: When our Lord opened their understanding by expounding the Things concerning himself, that they might understand and *know* them, from understanding and knowing what they meant, they believed them. When he accuses the Worldly-minded with *O ye of little Faith*, § their Crime was, they did not with their Reason consider how God clothed the Lilies of the Field, and

† 2 Pet. i. 5.

\* 1 John xvi. 30.

† — x. 38.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 3.

|| 1 John iv. 16.

§ Matt. vi. 30.



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 XVIII. to cloath *them*; much therefore to use one's Reason in divine Providence, is to have much Faith. Why is the Woman of *Canaan's* Faith called *great* by our Saviour, *Matth. xv. 28.* but because her Reasoning upon the Goodness of God not to with-hold *Crumbs* of Favour to any of his Creatures, was very great and apparent in her Answer. There are many other Places where *know* and *believe* are the same.\* *Ye believe in God, believe also in me—this is Life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom, &c.* So the abounding, growing, nourishing up in, and to the full Assurance of Faith and Knowledge, are synonymous. We say we *believe* in God, yet we *know* him by our Reason. *Heb. xi. 3. By Faith we understand that the Worlds were made by the Word of God:* So that Knowledge and Faith seem to be coincident in the popular, as Reason and Faith are in the philosophical Sense of those Words. Man is born to know God, but that Knowledge being impair'd by the Fall, and therefore not to be recover'd to its pristine Perfection, by reason of the Encroachment and Incumbrance of the Body, till we arrive at the next World; makes that present proper Knowledge we have of him from Faith or Revelation to coincide in that Point of bringing us thither, and Reason working upon those Materials of Knowledge, and exerting itself chiefly in sure and certain *Invisibles*, according to its chief Function, meets

\* *Job xix. 25. — xlii. 2. Prov. xi. 9. Eccl. xi. 9. Psal. cxl. 12. Is. xliii. 10. Matt. xxiv. 39. John iv. 25. — xi. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 58. 2 Cor. v. 1. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. x. 34. 1 John iii. 3. — v. 13.*

Faith more than half the Way, and goes to Heaven with it. Natural Reason, as well as Faith in God, both agree in declaring that he is, and is a *Rewarder* of those that diligently seek him: and as they agree in that Premise, by the Help of the Medium of *Revelation*, they agree likewise in the Conclusion, explicit Faith in the *Mediator*, or the Gospel. How that Faith most readily follows and flows from the other, will appear afterwards. Faith extends itself to past things, and to future: With respect to the former, it is historical Knowledge grounded upon reasonable Evidence; in regard to the latter, the Anchor of Hope.

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As the Understanding perceives the Ideas of Things to agree or disagree, have, or not have a Connexion together, whether immediately, or by the intervention of other Ideas, it makes an affirmative or negative Judgment, assents or dissents. What is made necessary for it to perceive, and judge of with respect to revealed Truths, *is not* above Reason; *i. e.* its Perception and Judgment, though it *was* above Reason; *i. e.* the Capacity of Man to have discovered without the Help of Revelation.

“ SOME things indeed, according to the  
“ vulgar Way of speaking, are said to be above  
“ Reason or beyond it; whereby is intimated  
“ that we may be capable of believing farther  
“ than we understand: This may be true in a  
“ qualified Sense; but in strictness of Speech,  
“ our Ideas do really extend, as far as Faith ex-  
“ tends. As there can be no Faith without  
“ Assent, nor any Assent but to some intelli-  
“ ble Proposition, nor any intelligible Proposi-  
“ tion

“ tion without intelligible Terms that have proper Ideas to answer them ; it is evident, that  
 “ our Ideas are of the same Extent with our  
 “ Faith, and that we understand as much, and  
 “ no more or less, than we believe — We understand for Instance, that there is a God,  
 “ and that certain Attributes essentially and incommunicably belong to him. But as to his  
 “ particular Essence or Substance, wherein it  
 “ formally consists, or distinguishes him from  
 “ all other Beings, we believe nothing, because  
 “ we are able to determine nothing. We understand in general, what the Resurrection of  
 “ a Body means ; and what it is for a Body to  
 “ continue for ever in a State of Order, Tranquillity and Perfection. As to the manner  
 “ how it subsists or acts in such a State, we can  
 “ believe nothing, neither is it requir’d that we  
 “ should, more or farther than we understand.  
 “ We believe the Thing because it is reveal’d,  
 “ and in Terms, the Meaning whereof is clear  
 “ and intelligible ; but the Manner can only so  
 “ far be an Object of our Faith, as it is of our  
 “ Perception ; neither can a wise God require us  
 “ to believe what we perceive nothing of. As  
 “ to the Doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity we  
 “ understand what we mean by One, and what  
 “ by Three ; the Meaning of the Terms co-eternal, co-equal, or co-essential is also known  
 “ to us ; but how or after what manner a Trinity of Persons, or if that is not admitted, of  
 “ any distinct Qualities, Powers, or Operations ;  
 “ or in other Words of three, under whatever  
 “ Distinction we receive them, should consist  
 “ with the perfect Unity of the Divine Essence,  
 “ is what we can neither believe, nor be requir’d  
 “ to believe any farther than we know. We  
 “ believe

“ believe as far as we have Ideas, and where we  
 “ have no Ideas can have no Belief; where our  
 “ Reason falls short and leaves us in the Dark,  
 “ our Faith does so too.”——

“ WE have Ideas so far as we believe; or may  
 “ have them, so far as we are obliged to believe,  
 “ and distinct Ideas too.”—— “ Revelation  
 “ gives us new notices of Things; it extends  
 “ and enlarges our Prospect, but leaves us the  
 “ same Faculties which we had before. So that  
 “ our Reason has still the same Use, only a  
 “ wider Compass to employ and exert itself. As  
 “ in all other Things proposed to our Belief, so  
 “ concerning any Articles of Religion, we are  
 “ to consult the Light of our Mind, and ex-  
 “ amine by our own Faculties, how far they are  
 “ to be admitted, and with what Restrictions;  
 “ what weight they should have with us; and  
 “ what may be justly infer’d from them? What  
 “ may be look’d upon as certain Truth; and  
 “ what as being founded only in Probability or  
 “ Conjecture.”—— “ The most comprehensive  
 “ and general Rule is, that the best Reasons,  
 “ if it be necessary to judge at all, should al-  
 “ ways preponderate; and consequently the  
 “ truest Faith is that, which upon the whole is  
 “ most rational. The *Bible*, by this Rule, will  
 “ be found the best System of Philosophy, and  
 “ a true Reasoner from the proper Lights and  
 “ Assistances of it will differ very little from a  
 “ true Believer\*.”

FAITH being the Assent of the Mind, to  
 know the Grounds of Assent is the same thing

\* *Fiddes Theol. Specul.* pag. 364, 5.



as to know the Grounds of Faith ; and as it is necessary that a rational Mind should have rational ground of Faith, so it has that ground so long as it builds upon rational Evidence. Now in the Case of the Gospel, the external Testimony of the Witnesses, co-attested by the intrinsic Marks of Truth in the Record itself, is as rational, as sufficient Evidence of the Truth, as any possibly can be had, in the Case. And with respect to the Mystery of its Faith, we build our Assent both upon the Knowledge and Confidence we have in the Veracity of the Speaker, that he can neither deceive nor be deceived ; and the Sense of our Duty that we ought to receive a Revelation of his Will, when he pleases to offer it ; and also upon our understanding what is reveal'd of the Mystery, though all is not ; and so understanding the Meaning and the Use of what is reveal'd of it, from a general implicit Act of Faith, that what God says is true, we receive and entertain it with a particular explicit Faith or Knowledge to the Use of Edifying. And so our Faith in every single Article follows after Knowledge going before ; and we improve in Faith, by improving in Knowledge, as it is enjoin'd and recommended to our latest Endeavours.

WE can know then, judge, believe only that part which is revealed ; *that belongs to us*, is made the Object of our Faculties for applying it to its proper Use and Intendment ; and the Subject of that Trial, Proof, and Examination that is commanded ; but the *secret* Part of it *belongs to God*, and not to us, and being of no present Use to us, requires no present Assent or Belief from us ; where the Meaning is not made known or revealed

vealed to us, no Meaning can be assented to by us; the Mind may as well assent without assenting, as assent to what it knows nothing of. But all the Articles that relate to our Salvation and the Favour of God, so far as they relate, are so clearly reveal'd with that universal Plainness as becomes an universal Fundamental, that Knowledge and Faith kiss each other in regard to Use and Meaning. And those other Particulars, which, with respect to the manner, are not cognizable upon our best Inquiry, according to our Capacity and Opportunity, are no Objects of our particular Belief, till we arrive to understand them in particular; and all the Time they remain above our Reason, and our Judgment is suspended about them, we employ both Reason and Judgment to the best use, in leading very Christian Lives notwithstanding, and at the great Day enter into the Joy of our Lord. This is the Sense of the *Church of England* in her *Homily*. "Those Things in Scripture that be plain  
" to understand, and necessary to Salvation,  
" every Man's Duty is to know them, to print  
" them in Memory, and effectually to exercise  
" them. And as to dark Mysteries, to be content to be ignorant of them until such time as  
" it shall please God to open them unto him.  
" In the mean Season, if he lack either Aptness,  
" or Opportunity, God will not impute it to his  
" Folly \*." "We are no more to believe we  
" know not what, than to believe we know not  
" why †." "Faith is the Conclusion of a  
" Syllogism ||."

\* *Second Part of the Homily of the Holy Scriptures.* † *Norris's Reason and Faith, pag. 64.* || *Ibid. pag. 90.*

OF the Incarnation of our Saviour, for Instance, God manifest in the Flesh, we know, judge, and believe, that he is the only begotten Son of God by Nature, that the Divine and Human Nature are united in one Person, the fittest and compleatest Mediator possible between God and Man, for doing every Thing related of him; and we know that whatever is possible, the Power of God can effect; but *how* he is the Son of God, or the Son of a Virgin; or *how* those two Natures are personally united, we know, judge, and believe nothing at all, because nothing is reveal'd; and that nothing is reveal'd is unquestionably, because we can't understand it at present; or because, if we could, there is no Edification in such Knowledge; the Apostle assuring us we can be edified by nothing but what we understand \*. But the other is a most religious and concerning Truth plainly reveal'd to common Understanding, to traffick withal to eternal Life; and that is, by coming to God through him, as the Mediator of Redemption and Intercession, of Repentance and Devotion, as the Patron of our Acceptance, who getteth thee Pardon for thy Sins, the perfect Teacher of God's Will, the Pattern of Obedience, and Judge of our Behaviour in Thought, Word and Deed, to give to every Man according to his deserving. And the common obvious Ideas of such a Son, of such a Father, raises an Apprehension of his Dignity; and no less Affection of Mind, as exalts the Love of the Father, and of the Son to the highest Degree conceivable; which conciliates and attracts our Love to them

\* 1 Cor. xiv.

upon the Principle of the greatest Benefits received, and to be received; and establishes our Trust, Honour and Adoration, as is it commanded.

THE inspired Writer directs what is to be done in the Case; *Secret Things belong unto the Lord our God; but those Things that are revealed (so far as they are so) unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law\**. There is an untranspassable Gulph fix'd between Knowledge reserv'd, and Knowledge communicated. There we have our way mark'd out, as it were with Rubricks, on this Hand, and on that; directing where we should not, and where we may tread, and for what purpose we are to travel in a Road, wherein we are all to travel. Our Search is prohibited, and all undue Temerity restrain'd that presumes to go beyond its prescribed Bounds, in quest of Intelligence in Things, where Intelligence is expressly withheld by the Father of Light and Wisdom. But as to what is reveal'd to its proper Faculty, the Understanding, so far our Pursuits and Enquiries are animated and encouraged to proceed; more especially when it proposes to draw those Uses and Improvements, which answer the declar'd Purpose of the Revelation, *that we may do all the Words of this Law*.

How proper and becoming then is it to regulate our Appetite after Knowledge by the Counsel of the Son of Syrach, *Seek not Things that are too hard for thee, neither search the Things that are above thy Strength; but what is commanded thee*

\* Deut. xxix. 29.



CHAP. XVIII. *think thereon with Reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine Eyes the Things that are secret; be not curious in unnecessary Matters, for more Things are shewn unto thee than Men understand, and many are deceiv'd with their own vain Opinion\*. Hardly do we guess aright at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are before us; but the Things that are in Heaven who hath searched out? Touching the Almighty we can't find him out to Perfection, nor can we order our Words by reason of Darknesst†.*

YET after all the Labyrinths of Dispute in Philosophic Theory, Christians are agreed (I speak to the *Deists*) in the *religious* Sense of one God, and of the Spirit of God sanctifying us, and in the general Practice of worshipping God through the Mediator, and in paying Divine Honour and Obedience to him, as well as to the Father, according to the Commandment. But why is the *Deist* and *Sceptick* so unfair, as to attend only to those Speculations wherein they differ, and not likewise to those Principles wherein they agree. They stand condemn'd by all Sides, and have no Right to condemn either, as neither joining in the Speculations wherein they vary, nor in the better Foundation wherein they agree; nor yet to condemn both Sides, unless there happens a Want of Temper, since that Foundation has been shewn to stand so sure. Whether there be three Minds or one Mind, three Wills or one Will, since it is agreed that the three Divine Persons co-operate together in creating, redeeming, and sanctifying; they act *as one God*, tho' not as one Person; therefore the *Deists* have no

\* *Ecc. iii. 21, &c.*


† *Wisd. ix. 26.*

Right to be so solicitous in a Dispute wherein CHAP. XVIII.  
they have no Share, excluding two of the Per-  
sons from having any thing to do in their Sal-  
vation.

IT remains then, that there is not that Dis-  
agreement between Reason and Faith objected  
by some, and as weakly yielded by other some;  
but a perfect good Understanding, Friendship,  
and Harmony between them; and that they are  
of mutual Service and sincere Benefit to each  
other.

IF Reason seeks the Religion of the End,  
which is so valuable, that it is desirous of know-  
ing it better, and of finding out the best Means  
for performing it to the pleasing God, Faith is  
that obliging Friend offering that better Know-  
ledge, and best Means; and Reason to prove  
itself what it is, accepts the Offer with all Thank-  
fulness, and, to improve, and enjoy the Friend-  
ship as it ought, out of Love to the End so  
much clearer brought to Light, makes use of  
the Assistance of Faith as a Means only of what  
it offers itself, but still the best and only  
Means of pleasing God. And so the moral Oblig-  
ation of the Law of Nature becomes *Religious*,  
and by believing also in Christ, becomes *Christian*,  
which is the Perfection of all Religion.

I. IF Reason is taken for the *universal Law of Reason*, implanted in the Hearts of all Men, di-  
recting what is Good and Evil, Right and Wrong,  
in all Relations of Persons, and Things, in their  
several Circumstances: The Christian Faith is so  
far from disagreeing with it, that it is its pro-  
fess'd End and the declar'd Object of all its Ef-  
forts,

CHAP. XVIII.  forts, as coming from the same heavenly Source of Light and Truth, to ratify all that kept to its true Original, and supply all that was wanting, or irregular through Corruption, or Tract of Time; and purposely to furnish the wanted, the most efficacious, admirable Means in all the World for carrying it into all the Perfection it is capable of in Life.

2. IF it is taken for the *Cause*, as *Eccl. vii. 25. I applied my Heart to seek out Wisdom and the Reason of Things*; or the *Ground* or *Motive* of a Thing, as *1 Pet. iii. 15. Be ready to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you*; there arises from Faith to this sort of Reason, all manner of Concord, Illustration, and Improvement. For in the *moral Government* of the World and the Truths relating to that (the Sphere of Truth, Cause and Effect, it especially confines itself to; after settling the Creation of the World, and the destroying Deluge, both creating a moral Dependence, it speaks of common natural Truths only popularly, and occasionally) it opens the FOUNTAIN of moral Causes, and their Effects; shews the Concatenation between moral Means and Ends, and the Advantage of the best Means to the best Ends; and for Grounds and Motives of Action, and Forbearance of Action, it produces and proffers the greatest and highest that can be offer'd: Whilst it exhibits the Grounds of its own Stability as firm as a Rock, and the Motives of its Persuasion to be the Strength of all Reason, that can ever be collected from the Truth of Record, or the Reason of Things. Was it deserted of Reason, it would sink into Credulity; but as it essentially sounds itself upon rational As-

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sent,

sent, it glories in the Name of Faith by maintaining itself to be the highest Reason ; and therefore can never disagree with Reason, without disagreeing with itself. Thus when the Christian is order'd *to be ready to give an Answer* or Apology *to every Man that asketh the Reason or Ground of the Hope that is in him*, i. e. Remission of Sins, Access, and Acceptance with God, Resurrection of his Body and eternal Life ; what surer or more satisfying, or more rational Ground can he set forth to others, or support himself with, than *Jesus Christ the Mediator* ? By that Faith in him, he *sanctifies the Lord God in his Heart*, in all those Particulars.

3. If it is taken for the *understanding Faculty*, as it apprehends, judges, and infers, as *Dan. iv. 36.* My *Reason* return'd to me, i. e. my Understanding ; Christian Faith is the best Friend it has in the World ; it amicably corrects it, when it exceeds itself, by advising *to think soberly, and not more highly than it ought to think*, nor to pretend *to be wise above what is written* ; it dissipates Error and Vice which blinds and befools it, governing the Passions that prejudice or precipitate it ; it opens a new Fountain of the choicest of all Knowledge for healing all its Master's Infirmities, and drinking thereat, may never thirst for other Remedies, there all its Powers are invited to regale themselves with what they naturally pant after ; and encourages its discursive Faculties to examine themselves whether they are *in the Faith*, or out of the Influences of it ; to search, try, prove, and disapprove, as they find it right so to do.



## CHAP.

## XVIII.

FOR it is the Understanding that discerns and judges what is the Mind of God, and though 'it is not the Measure of all Truth, yet it is, and must be the *Apprehender* of all that concerns us to know of divine Things, to give those Things their moral and divine Operation upon us. The Will can't chuse without Knowledge, nor does its work by way of Charm. The Faith requir'd of us is both a Rational and Fœderal Thing, and therefore must be the Result of the Understanding, as well as the Will; we, otherwise, assent and covenant to we know not what. It is Reason that brings us to Revelation, and satisfies us whether it really comes from God, or not; and that would still be as a Book altogether without Meaning, was it not address'd and subjected to its Capacity to find it out, comparing spiritual Things with spiritual, and in what Acceptation the Words are to be taken: whether Literal or Figurative; in what Latitude or Limitation; what the probable, what the certain Sense; what is to be inferr'd from; and how it concerns us. For though all Propositions and Facts therein are true, yet some concern us more than others, and some Persons more than others; nor is it necessary to be satisfied in all Doubts, any more than it is, to have *all* Controversies decided: whilst we are sure, those Truths concern us most of all, which have eternal Life or Death annex'd to them. For those Truths carry the Design of Christianity along with them upon our corresponding Endeavours; and whereupon the Spirit, which knows the Mind of God, has laid the chief Stress and Concern, Those should be chiefly respected by all Christian People. Thus Christianity maintains itself a reasonable Service,

by

by requiring nothing in general to be believed, that is contrary to Reason, nor any thing with explicit Particularity, that is above the Apprehension of it.

THE true Medium therefore is, to give to Faith the Things that are *Faith's*; in first bringing the Discovery of those heavenly divine Truths, which were *above* the *Capacity* of human Understanding to *have found out*, or have any manner of explicit Knowledge of, without the Assistance of Revelation. And to give to Reason the Things that are *Reason's*; in allowing it the Right of its Province and the Uses of its Function, in modestly enquiring, and usefully finding out the true Meaning of those reveal'd Truths.

MR. *Le Clerc* has shewn, *That the Defect of Reasoning is one of the Causes of INFIDELITY* \*. It certainly was the Cause of the Unbelief of our first Parents, and their Credulity of the *Devil*, the first Inlet of Sin; and ever since, all over the World, departing from Faith in the God of Truth, the Creator of the World, has been Man's Departure from his own Happiness. And as the Scope of God and his Truth is to bring us to Happiness, by true Reasoning and an honest Heart; the Defect of it, in believing a Lye for the sake of countenancing beloved Unrighteousness, may deservedly be branded with Obstinacy, Credulity, and Bigottry in Falshood and Sin. Archbishop *Tillot*. Serm. *Heb. xi. 18, 19.* has finely shewn that the Excellency of *Abraham's* Faith, (the great Pattern of all Faith) was wholly owing to the strongest and justest Reasoning that ever could be, in the Case.

\* Treatise of *Incredulity*, pag. 63.

CHAP. XVIII. For that to be sure was solid and unshagger'd Reasoning in him, which was so ready and able to reconcile two Revelations from God, which seemed to clash with one another. To which may be added the *Centurion's* Faith, the Greatness of which exceeding all in *Israel*, was owing to the Greatness of his Reasoning. And indeed all true and strong Faith is true and strong Reasoning upon the Evidences of it: And the honest Heart that is a Friend and Improver of Reason from the Relation and Connection of Things, as the Author of Nature has fram'd, and Revelation discover'd them, is the true Friend of Faith; whilst *Enthusiasm*, *Sophistry*, and *Ridicule* are the greatest Enemies to Reason, betray their own Defects, and every Cause they undertake; and as long as they continue Adversaries to Reason, can have no true Friendship for Faith.

BUT such wretched *Sophistry* is the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. guilty of, to the total Subversion of Faith, Sense, and Conscience, where he asserts, "Indeed it's an odd Jumble to  
 " prove the Truth of a Book by the Truth of  
 " the Doctrine it contains, and at the same time  
 " conclude those Doctrines to be true, because  
 " contain'd in that Book: And yet that is a  
 " Jumble every one makes, who contends for  
 " Mens being absolutely govern'd both by Reason, and Authority \*." By Authority he means *Revelation*, as he expresses himself a little above: "Now we Christians have two supreme,  
 " independent Rules, *Reason* and *Revelation*;  
 " and both require an absolute Obedience." For, is it not a great Fallacy to make those two

\* Pag. 164

Rules both *supreme*, and *independent* of one another, when they are actually subordinate and dependent on each other, and accord in perfect Harmony and Friendship, in recommending one and the same End to all Men, who have Knowledge of the Revelation, and will truly pursue that End. What one calls the Happiness of Man, the other stiles the Salvation of the Soul, both meaning the same Thing. Reason is *subordinate* and dependent upon *Revelation*, in one Sense, and ought to be very thankful for discovering such glorious Doctrines, such heavenly and effectual Means for that End, which were *above* its Sphere ever to have found out, unassisted by the other. And Revelation is subordinate and dependent upon *Reason* in another Sense, by appealing to its Search and Inquiry into the Meaning of its Truths, and the Ends and Uses of its Doctrines.

I BEFORE join'd Issue with our Author upon his own *Criterion*, the internal Evidence, Fitness, and Goodness of the *peculiar* Doctrines or *Positives* of Christianity, upon which as a *Deist* he puts the whole Stress of his Cause, exclusive and in derision of the Evidence of Miracles, *viz.* Whether those Doctrines are *worthy to have God for their Author*, and are design'd for the Good of Men. When I treated of the *Sacraments*, and the *Mediator*, I appealed to Reason for the Wisdom and Goodness of those Institutions, in both Respects; and proved him a most unreasonable Writer in accusing God and Revelation of *Arbitrariness*, and that his Misrepresentations proceeded from his Ignorance, or Wickedness, or both. Where he turns *Sceptick* as to the external Evidence attesting the Conveyance of the Revelation,



CHAP. revelation, I shall answer him hereafter as a *Sceptick*.  
 XVIII. But here he acts the *Deist* in rejecting Revelation,  
 as an Authority incompatible with Reason.

Now what is the Authority of Revelation, but an Authority of Truth, Love, and Goodness, recommending itself to our Reason and Choice, from the God who created us for Happiness; who, being still desirous of it, when the Means fail'd through the Perverseness of Man, supplied such from Heaven, as should be effectual even to a greater Happiness, and put him in a new and better State of Probation than before, and again propound that to his Choice; to some People and Nations more explicitly than others? It does not offer to command Men for commanding sake, or to lead them blindfold, but by the evident Prospect of their own Happiness, and the Dread they ought to have of their own Misery; these two, the most sovereign and controuling Instincts of human Nature, are laid open before them, under the appointed *Captain* of Salvation; therefore so called because he *leads* all the Means, and is the Author and Finisher of that *Faith* which is the Means. When Reason, seeing abundant Evidence that it comes from God, and that such an immense Love and Goodness can have no other Author, submits accordingly to its own Interest and Benefit, is not the Authority, in that Case, of Reason's own *choosing* and *imposing*? How then is *such* an Authority inconsistent with Reason, when it is the highest Reason in the World to be govern'd by it absolutely, and without Reserve? And when the Rule of Reason and the Rule of Revelation are both obey'd, they both become co-ordinate to the same End, and Guide to the same Place. So perfectly well may a Man be  
 absolutely

absolutely govern'd both by Reason, and by *such* CHAP.  
an Authority, at the same Time. XVIII.



AND as it makes frequent mention of God and his Attributes, it would be a just Objection, if every thing of such a Being was made level to human Comprehension (could that be done) any farther than was useful to our present State, which might easily be done, and is done. Therein if there are some Truths necessary to the Salvation of the Believer, which unassisted Reason could have discover'd, a Suspicion might arise of all being an *human* Invention; but as the heavenly Sublimity of its Love and Benefits surpasses all its Invention, has not Reason the firmer Ground to believe it came from thence, seeing the Contrivance, and Discovery so well agree with every Perfection that rules there?

HE says it is an “ odd Jumble, to prove the  
“ Truth of a Book by the Truth of the Doc-  
“ trines it contains; and at the same Time to  
“ conclude these Doctrines to be true, because  
“ contain'd in that Book.” But the Jumble lay  
in his own Brains, that could put such a Fallacy  
upon himself, or offer it to others. He might know  
what every body acknowledges, that the Proof  
of the Truth of the Book does not wholly de-  
pend upon the internal Evidence of the Truth of  
the Doctrine contain'd; but external Evidence  
of other Truths concur, and are expected by  
every Inquirer, to co-attest, and complete the  
Proof of the Truth of the Book. A curious  
Searcher will not be contented with one, without  
the other; the former serves to satisfy, that there  
is no Objection from the Falshood or Unreason-  
ableness of the Contents, to proceed to a fur-

CHAP.  
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ther Inquiry (as is the Case of *Mabometan*, and the constant Objection to every false Revelation.) And as those Doctrines depend upon the Truth of Matters of Fact so many Years ago, which depend upon the Truth of History; and the extrinſick Teſtimony of the Record muſt be conſulted by every one who would be *fully* ſatisfied, and have an entire Conviction of the Truth of the Book, to rely upon. And when that is relied upon, then the contained Doctrines receive a farther Confirmation of their native Truth, from the external Ratification of the Authority of the Book: the Doctrines are not truer or more reaſonable in themſelves afterwards, than before; but they are of more Authority after than before, and the Receiver of that Authority makes the Truth ſurer than before; and ſo oblige all reaſonable Men both upon account of their intrinſick Reaſonableneſs, and alſo upon account of the Divine Author they proceed from. But the Deiſts are ſo unreaſonable, as not to admit the Truth neither of the Book, nor its Doctrines, upon either of the Evidences, ſingle, or together.

W H A T he argues in the ſame Page, is equal Sophiſtry and Impertinence: “ If you are to be  
 “ govern’d by Revelation, that ſuppoſes you  
 “ muſt take every thing on Truſt; or merely  
 “ becauſe it is ſaid by thoſe, for whoſe Dictates  
 “ you are to have an implicit Faith: For to  
 “ examine into the Truth of what they ſay, is  
 “ renouncing their Authority; as on the con-  
 “ trary, if Men are to be govern’d by their Rea-  
 “ ſon, they are not to admit any thing further  
 “ than as they ſee it reaſonable. To ſuppoſe  
 “ both conſiſtent, is to ſuppoſe it conſiſtent to  
 “ take, and not to take, Things on Truſt. To  
 receive

“ receive Religion on the Account of Authority CHAP.  
 “ supposes, that if the Authority promulgated XVIII.  
 “ a different Religion we should be obliged  
 “ to receive it.” To examine into the Truth  
 and Reasonableness of what they say, who deliver  
 the Truths of Revelation, is so far from *renouncing*  
 their Authority, that it is a submitting to it,  
 where they expressly invite, and require us to  
 examine, try, prove, search, and judge for  
 ourselves what is right; so that taking Things  
 on Trust, is trusting our own Reason to under-  
 stand the Meaning, and the Uses, and to make  
 Application to the End. And to imagine that  
 “ if the Authority promulgated a different Re-  
 “ ligion, we should be obliged to receive it,”  
 is to suppose God perfect and imperfect, true and  
 false. However it is no hard Supposition upon  
 them, that if he should promulgate the same  
 Religion, with a new Set of Miracles, and the  
*Deists* be present at the Working of them, that  
 the greatest Part of them would be what they  
 are, Unbelievers. The Reasons of which will  
 appear afterwards.

No Principle of Reason contradicts any Article  
 of Faith; they are both Truths, and one certain  
 Truth never clashes with another certain Truth,  
 but ever harmonize together by an eternal  
 Property and Prerogative of proceeding from  
 the same Source, the God of Truth; who can  
 neither contradict himself, nor make Contra-  
 dictions true. What is the Meaning of *St. Paul's*  
*natural Man not receiving the Things of the Spirit*  
 was shewn before, and appears to be no manner  
 of Objection against carnal Reason, or Reason  
*dwelling in Flesh*, being capable of understanding



CHAP. XVIII. what concerns us in the Scripture; weak as it is, it must be admitted, because we have no other Faculty to arrive at the Knowledge of it, and God requires its Application for that purpose. Nor is that Precaution, *Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit*\*, any Exception; for that Philosophy, as the Place shews, was such as tended to lead Men from the Doctrine of Christ, by leading them after the *Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World*, current in those Days; that sort is indeed vain Deceit, endless Genealogies, Science falsely so call'd. Besides these two Scriptures there is nothing to countenance; and those are nothing to the Purpose of skreening the Abusers, and Misrepresenters both of Faith, and Reason.

SEEING then there is a strict Alliance, and perpetual Confederacy, sacred and inviolable, between Reason and Faith; they must be Enemies to themselves, to God, and Man, to the Rights of human Understanding, and to the Prosperity of *Christ's* Kingdom, who endeavour to pick a Quarrel between them, and strive to set them at Variance. Such are

I. THE *Papists*; they declare open War against Reason; Why? But because the whole System of *their* Faith, as such, is compacted of the most pernicious and destructive Corruptions of the Faith of *Christ*; ruining the Life and Design of that Religion of the Means for carrying on the Religion of the End, by frequently, and most traiterously murdering this last, even all the

\* 2 Col. ii. 8.

Laws of God concerning the Ends of Religion, CHAP. XVIII.  
 for the sake of propagating and enlarging the  
 Worldly Carcass of the Means of their Debauching;  
 being the most apparent, notorious, idolatrous Trai-  
 tors in his mediatorial Kingdom, by setting up  
 other Mediators of Intercession beside him, and  
 almost wholly to the Neglect of him.

NOR does it at all mend the Matter, that  
 they add to the End of such Prayers, *through*  
*Jesus Christ*: because that plainly confesses, and  
 irreligiously presumes, in the Face of Jesus Christ,  
 that he is not the *one sufficient* Intercessor; nor the  
*only ordain'd*; nor the only *capable* Mediator of  
 being pray'd to, or of taking *Cognizance* of Prayers:  
 Does not the joining other Intercessors with him,  
 actually commit all those Injuries against him?  
 And if he is believ'd not to be a *sufficient* Inter-  
 cessor, as he really is, and they dare not deny;  
 to neglect him as *such*, is the same Thing as to  
 neglect and frustrate his Intercession altogether.

THE two grand Engines they successively play  
 against Reason and Faith in their gainful Plot  
 against both, are *Infallibility*, and *Transubstantia-*  
*tion*; and by their Manner of working them it  
 is very plain, they allow Men the Use, neither  
 of Reason, nor Faith; but purely, and solely to  
 bring them into their Church, and keep them  
 there. The first leading Artifice of the skulk-  
 ing Kidnappers, the Missionaries, is to ensnare  
 the *intended* Convert with a solemn Promise of  
*Secrecy*, not to communicate the clear, unsuspected  
 Kindness offered by a *Stranger*, to either Father,  
 Mother, Friend, or Minister, till they have  
 wholly embraced it: The next is to appeal to the  
 Party's Reason, and perhaps to a Text in Scrip-  
 P 3 ture,

ture, 1 *Tim.* iii. 15. the *Church* being *Pillar of Truth*, which they dexterously pervert, if the other happens not to understand it; and then craftily arguing and sophistically syllogizing him into a Necessity of having an *infallible* Certainty of Faith, (and under that, always comes in their peremptory Exclusion of all Protestants from Salvation, and the Protestants allowing a Possibility of it with them; an Argument that does not in the least concern the Truth, but the different *Temper* or *Charity* of the Doctrine of one, or t'other altogether) which their Church has the Impudence to assume, and the Protestants the Virtue to disclaim; being a Prerogative that appertains not to us Mortals neither severally, nor in a collective Capacity; nor is it communicable to any Creature: the *Infallibility* of always *understanding*, and always *choosing* what is eternally right belong only unto God himself\*. The Angels, fallible in Understanding, mutable in Will, for that reason are not clean and tight in the Sight, or comparison of the *One* Infallible, *Sole* Immutable Deity. If human Infallibility therefore can be no better than a broken Reed to depend on, what makes them such Fools to quarrel among themselves, who shall have the keeping of it?

AFTER he has once embraced *that kind* of Faith, and surrender'd up his Reason, they have no longer Occasion for it; he is led blindfold ever after, his *Senses* as well as Reason fall a credulous blind Sacrifice to *Transubstantiation*. The Belief of which Impossibility completely subverts the

\* What sort of certainty our Faith admits of, see next Head, *Moral Virtue* of Faith.

Proof of Miracles, the great external Evidence of Christianity, *Acts* i. 3. stiling such Appeals to Sense and Reason, *infallible Proofs*; and subverts likewise the Evidence of the Being of God, which supposes the common Reasoning it out from the infallible Certainty of *seeing* his Handy-works in the Frame of the World. And as soon as his Faith is strong enough to swallow *that*, without choaking Belief, it is presently set at nought, and (as well it might) becomes weak and impotent, not able to save them; but the *Merit* of Works steps up to do that Job: and if they are not inclinable to those Works themselves, there is *Stock* enough in the Church to be purchased; and the greatest Rascal of them all, with the Priest's Absolution, and Extreme Unction, is sure of going to Heaven. Thus Faith in the *Pope* and his Church, with little or no Regard to any in Christ, without Sense, Reason, or Gospel, becomes a Fool's Paradise upon Earth. And so their Faith is entirely an *human* Faith, resting, not upon God, or his Word, (being shut out from the Inspection of that) but on Man, upon a Cabal of Impostors, for the Salvation of their Souls. In the ruling Part of which Faith, the Spirit of the World wholly steers, and will steer the Mystery of Iniquity, that very gainful Absurdity, as long as thick Darkness and Ignorance, Slavery of Mind, and Extinction of Reason is contented to obey, and deceive itself with the *Name* of Christianity, Piety, and Catholick, without the Reality or Integrity of any one of them. For *Ecclesiastical* Christianity with them is quite a different Thing from the *New Testament*, real, pure Christianity; whilst truly *Clerical*, *Protestant*, *Evangelical* Christianity agree in one, are all one and the same;



CHAP. though in some Places, perhaps intermixt with  
XVIII. some small Frailties of human Judgment.

THUS the *disguised Papist* in Protestant Countries, makes his Advantage of the other Extreme of Reason, in *Excess*, as, at home, he does of Reason in *Defect*. And that Church, and the *Missionary* from it, find their Interest and Account, in playing into the Hand of *Albeism*, *Deism*, and *Scepticism*, with a Wink, sily, but faithfully promoting them what they can: And these, overwitted by those Layers-in-wait, play into the others Hand unknowingly, and are in a true Disposition to become *Profelytes* \*.  
For

\* None, in Fact, are more credulous Bigots than modern Infidels; they strain at the Gnat of wholesom Religion the saving Gospel, and swallow a Camel, i. e. as great a Load of Absurdities as a Camel can carry. Take a Specimen from a few: They deny both the *Interposition*, and the *Vengeance* of God; yet let them dig where they will in any Hill, or Vale upon Earth (if *Teneriff* says nothing, it is because it is agreed upon the View, to be a *Post deluvian* Hill, sprung up from an Earthquake) undeniable Relicks, and Spoils of the prevailing *Deluge* stare them in the Face; in promiscuous *Trees*, *Shells*, *Skeletons* of Fish and Animals subsiding in Countries absolute Strangers to them. Yet they pleasantly maintain that none of the Punishments of God are *final*, but all for Correction of the Offender. Then, seeing the Memory and Monuments of a Flood over the highest Mountains (probably 15 Cubits according to Revelation) cannot be buried, they grant you a *partial* Deluge, wise Philosophers as they are! and so most absurdly believe, that Water can climb up Hill, and by Miracle be suspended in the Air, to make their *partial* Deluge: Whereas, by their own Concession, if it has covered the highest Mountain, it must by its *own Nature*, and without an interposing Miracle, cover all Hills, and consequently all Habitations in the World. So ridiculously do they go about to evade one Miracle by believing a much greater.

They believe God has a World of Goodness in him, so far as to oblige him to confer upon them all the Happiness their Nature is capable of; they feel and confess the Imperfection and

For the two Extremes having no regard to the Medium, where the true Religion only lies, produce each other. Over-believing or Credulity in *Popish* Mysteries, contrary to all Rule and Reason of believing, when it perceives its Folly, naturally produces No-believing, which is equally contrary to the same Rule and Reason of believing: And No-believing, or Infidelity, when tired and sick of itself, for want of some Rule to guide its fluctuating bewilder'd State, as naturally runs into the other Extreme, in order to compensate for its former Fault. How true in Fact is it, that Popery, in its warmest Nest in *Italy*, hatches plenty of *Deists*, some adorned with the *red Hat*, some with a *Triple Crown* \*. “ It is certain, says Bishop *Burnet* in his Travels, “ that in *Italy*, Men of searching Understand- “ ings, who have no other Idea of the Christian “ Religion, but that which they see receiv’d “ among them, are very naturally tempted to “ disbelieve it quite; for they believing it all “ alike in gross, without Distinction, and find- “ ing such notorious Cheats as appear in many “ Parts of their Religion, are upon that induc’d “ to disbelieve the Whole.” In the Vulgar it generates little more than the *old* Deism of *Europe* in a new Edition of Tutelar Mediators; in

and Disorders of their present Nature; yet they wont suffer him to interpose or reveal any Remedy, or prescribe the least Thing to mend their Condition; they would be well, but they will take nothing!

They deny the *positive, judicial* Distribution of future Rewards and Punishments, incredible monstrous Persuasion! yet confess the Providence of God ruling over this *unequal* Scene of Things.

Can *Transubstantiation* be more insufferable than these Beliefs, or betray more *Credulity*?

\* *Quantum profuit nobis hæc Fabula Christi!*

the

CHAP. the better sort, *modern* Deism. And how easily  
 XVIII. is the *East* \* and *West India* Deism turn'd into  
 ~~~~~ *Popery*, having so near a Resemblance to one  
 another?

AND after the true Religion for another World and the Favour of God is rejected by them, which is the true Medium of believing, and also the *Protestant* System; some publick Religion must exist, and a worldly Religion, that of *Papists*, presenting itself, they are, when the proper Turn comes, and the Infection has generally spread itself, ripe for it: for indeed *such* a Religion exactly fits them; the *Diests** can still retain what they set their Heart upon, the Love of their Sins, which they know in their Conscience was the sole Reason of disliking the Religion of Protestants: both these they retain with a good Grace; *Popish* Faith even countenancing and dispensing with them in it, by easy Pardons and Indulgences: and in running down the Protestant Way of Salvation by depretiating the Holy Scriptures as a Rule of Life and Salvation, the *Papists* vie, and concur with them. A boundless Licentiousness of Practice, such as

* Vid. *Varen. descript. Reg. Japon.* pag. 200. As to the *West Indies*, the Similitude of *Inhumanity* is notoriously confessed by the best Writers of their own Travels. The Inhabitants of *Mexico* and *Peru* offer'd up incredible Multitudes of human Sacrifices in the most bloody Manner, to their Gods and Mediators; and the *Spaniards*, no less bloody, sacrificed Millions of those Innocents to their *Saints* and false Mediators; whilst the true Mediator forbid it with the utmost Abomination. *Cortes* the Conqueror of *Mexico*, according to *Purchas's* Collection, pag. 990, pull'd down the Images of their Saints, and in their Room set up that of the *Virgin Mary*. Where you may find a Parallel between the *Mexican Pagan Fryars, Nuns, &c.* and the modern *Popish* Superstitions of that sort.

the

the Deists glory in, whenever it becomes National, is moreover naturally and methodically disposed (supposing Abbey-Lands out of the Question) to seek its ease, in exchanging that publick Religion which gives no Quarter, or the least Indulgence to their Vices, for that flattering *Public Superstition* which commutes for them at an easy Price, and continues the Hopes of Heaven.

So fatal to *our Publick*, and to every Individual of it, is unbounded Liberty in Principle, and Practice! So perpetually seasonable, and profitable is the Controul of Scripture, and Reason!

How jealous then in common Policy, should *Protestant* Powers be of the *spreading*, or in the least countenancing such lewd, unreasonable, unfociable Dissolutions, and Contradictions of their own true Faith of Christ? Since they are in undeniable Danger of losing the *Heart* and *Conscience* of every Subject converted to the other Religion. Though the *Supremacy* of the Pope is denied in Temporals, yet it is universally acknowledged by all of that Persuasion in *Spirituals*, for the *Extirpation* of *Hereticks*, *i. e.* Protestants. Their Heart and Aversion will ever be the same, and nothing but the Want of Power, and the presiding Favour of God and Christ disappoints them of it; and every sincere Protestant should moreover endeavour to prevent it, by the mild Ways and Reasons of his Religion, for the sake of *Christ*, and the Prosperity of his Kingdom; because every such Convert is a Subject likewise lost to his *mediatorial Kingdom*.

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I AM the more confirm'd in this Observation from a Passage in Dr. *Clark*. “ But above all, “ the greatest and most effectual Means that we “ can possible use to prevent the Growth of Popery and Superstition, is to be infinitely careful not to run into that Atheism and profane “ Libertinism, which is the contrary Extreme “ to Superstition. For as unreasonable Superstition enslaves the Minds of Men, and makes “ them so uneasy under the Yoke, that they “ often fly off into the contrary Extreme of Irreligion and Profaneness; so the natural Effect of Profaneness, when Men see the intolerable Consequences and Mischiefs of it, is “ to drive weak Minds into the other Extreme “ of Superstition. If therefore while we fly from “ the Superstition of Popery, we run into the “ Contempt of *all* Religion; that profane Libertinism will probably terminate in Popery again *.” “ The patronizing such a *blind Faith*, naturally tends to a *total Infidelity*; as a *total Infidelity* tends reciprocally to the Support of such a *blind Faith* and *implicit Subjection*.” “ Will they not be carried away, “ by Inclination and worldly Hopes and Fears, “ to turn *Infidels* first, and then *implicit Believers*? first to believe *nothing*, that they “ may with the more Grace profess to believe “ *every Thing*,” according to the present Bishop of *Winchester* †.

2. THE *Solifidians* and other Sectaries in devious Notions of the Christian Faith, dangerously mistake, and disturb the Harmony and

* *Posthum. Serm.* Vol. VI. pag. 388. † See his Tracts from pag. 498, to 502.

Subordination,

Subordination, which God and his Gospel have establiſh'd between that Faith, and the eternal Law of Reason; by exalting the former, which is but a Duty of the Means, upon the Ruins and Contempt of the perpetual Duty of the latter: As if there could be any Value or Virtue in the *Means* unapplied to, or ineffective of the End it was purpoſely ordained to produce, and ſo clearly proclaimed to be ſubordinate to the Accompliſhment of. But this more properly belongs to another Subject, the true Chriſtian Intention and Deſign of that Faith, where it is *embraced*.

3. THE *Deiſts* and others are guilty of making an open Rupture between Reason and Faith; by flattering and exalting naked unaffiſted Reason to an *Exceſs*, beyond the Conditions of Humanity, and contrary to the common Sentiments of the Wiſeſt, and almoſt the general Voice of Mankind; who have been all ſenſible of a Degeneracy in their moral Powers, and the Want of ſome Redreſs. And now that complete Redreſs of, and Conſolation to, all thoſe diſquieting Ailments is come down from Heaven, and has diſplay'd its healing Virtues and Uſes, it muſt be very unkind and ungrateful to ply all its Force and Efforts, or play any conceited Artifice, Sophiſtry, or Ridicule againſt its beſt and trueſt Friend; that brings Knowledge to its Ignorance, and Relief to its Doubts, perfect Peace and Reconciliation between Enemies; and, if there is not a Fault on one Side, mutual Love and Complacency, the original Felicity of our Being. The Wickedneſs and Folly of which Proceeding will better appear under the next Head.

III. *The moral Virtue of Faith.*

TAKING Faith in the Sense before describ'd, I proceed to shew how it is a moral Virtue; or what Share the Will of Man has in it, which makes him accountable to God for his Faith. It must be acknowledg'd on all Hands, that the original, permanent Use of our Faculties, Understanding, Will, and Affections is, to assist us to attain the true End of Man, Happiness in this Life, and that which is to come. And it cannot be denied, that the Will is the *ruling* Faculty over all the rest, and, the Light of the Understanding being at hand and very much at its Command, constitutes it the *moral* Agent in every Man; for every Man has the Argument of *Experience* within himself superior to all the Subtleties of Dispute, that he can freely chuse, or refuse, after all is said and done, with respect to the Object laid before him; and be as certain of that *Man-moving*, *self-determining* Power in all his moral Actions, as he is of Motion; tho' he is not able to answer the super-refin'd impertinent Objections against it.

NOR is there any outward Restraint upon his Liberty, but what he has the Freedom to throw off; nor yet any inward Hindrance or Fetters put upon it, but what is of his own occasioning; excepting always one Restraint, which he is not, nor ought not to be free from, and that is a Determination to *Good*: because that is the Perfection of Human Liberty and Choice as it derives from God, and is the Liberty of God himself,

self, as I have before shewn*: Nor is there any other *Fate* upon Man (the *Fate* of God himself if it may be so express'd) excepting that hard Condition of being conditionally fated to his own Happiness according to the Circumstances and Opportunities put in his Power; and, in order to render it *his* Happiness, is still left to the Option of his own Choice, and the Result of his own Endeavours.

THE Deists allow this *Fate* and *Destiny* to Happiness, but in a very absurd Sense; they oblige God to confer all the Happiness upon Man *his Nature is capable of*, not as a Gift they would thank him for, or a *Reward* of his promising, but *necessarily* due to their Behaviour; and so, they profoundly think, they secure and can extort Happiness, whilst they indulge themselves in the Neglect of some of the *proper* Conditions, and Qualifications. But God without Dominion including the Dependence of his Creatures upon his Will, and without subsequent Providence distributing Rewards and Punishments proportion'd to Deeds, and so appearing before all the World to distinguish the Good from the Bad, is nothing else but *Fate* or *Nature*, or some other *insignificant Name* exclusive of *Governor*. But it is in vain to think of flattering or persuading him out of his righteous Government in giving eternal Life only in *Christ Jesus*, and denying it to those who *knowingly reject* him.

THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* resolving, as he says, *to go to the Bottom of this Matter*, gives in this Account of Faith. "Faith

* Page 26. of this Vol.

" consider'd

CHAP. “ consider’d in itself can neither be a Virtue, or
 XVIII. “ a Vice, because Men can no otherwise believe
 “ than as Things appear to them: Nay, can
 “ there be an higher Affront to God than to
 “ suppose, he requires Men to judge otherwise
 “ than the Faculties he has given them, enable
 “ them to do? Or what can be more absurd
 “ than to imagine, that God will shew his Fa-
 “ vour to one for believing what he could not
 “ believe; and his Displeasure to another for
 “ not believing what he could not believe?
 “ And therefore Faith is only to be esteem’d
 “ by the Works it produces; for the strongest
 “ Faith may be worse than no Faith at all. *The*
 “ *Devils themselves* (who are held the most wick-
 “ ed Beings in the Universe) *believe and trem-*
 “ *ble* *.” This indeed is going to the Bottom
 of Infidelity.

IN answer to which, it is readily own’d, that the Understanding Faculty is passive in perceiving and judging of Truth, nor can it do otherwise than perceive and judge natural, or moral Truth, as it appears to it; any more than the Eye of the Body can help seeing and distinguishing its Objects when they are before it. Nevertheless, it is perfectly certain, that the Will has that controuling Power, as over the Eye of the Body, so over the Eye of the Mind, to turn it from one Object to another, and view one more attentively than another, just as it is, or is not, agreeable to it; it can divert the Understanding from perceiving or judging, by recommending other Objects to employ it; it can withdraw the Attention so soon, that the Per-

ception will be slighted and transient, and the Judgment cursory and precipitate ; it can suspend, or wholly deny the Efforts of the Passions and Members, which are the Executioners of its Pleasure, its Courtiers and Servants in daily Waiting ; so that there *shall be Eyes, and yet they see not, and Ears, and yet they hear not* : Or, if it has the Curiosity to be more exactly inform'd of the Matter through the other's Inspection and Discernment, it can sincerely continue the Search longer, or renew the Enquiry oftner : Still after Judgment given, and after it can't help joining in an assent of Approbation, it may nevertheless suspend or hinder all *effectual* assent of Application, or Determination of the executive Powers and Affections to proper Word, and Deed. It may be convinc'd perhaps for the present, and yet nothing suitable follow the Conviction, for want of *Probity* of Mind, call'd in Scripture, *an honest and good Heart* (the *Heart* being therein assign'd as the Faculty of effectual believing) for entertaining the Truth in the *Love of its Design* and Purpose, for *renewing* the Mind, and all the bad Actions proceeded from it, *with the HEART Man believeth unto Righteousness* ; according to *Solomon, incline thine HEART to understand*. I own therefore, there is no Virtue in this sort of speculative Perceiving, Judging, or Inferring belonging to believing, no more than in doing the same ever so rightly with respect to any Object in Astronomy. This is but the *opus operatum*, the mere Carcass of Faith without any thing of the Spirit or Soul of perceiving, judging, or inferring. 'Ουδὲ, ἡ ἀρετὴ, καὶ κακία ἐν πείσει, ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ, M. Anton.

* Rom. x. 10.

CHAP. Lib. IX. 16. *Neither Virtue nor Vice consist in XVIII. speculative Persuasion, but practical Efforts.*

THE Virtue then, and then only commences, when the *Will*, knowing the Intention and Business such Truths and Doctrines have with it, receives them not with a simple Assent, or Approbation, as to Matter of Fact of the Truths, but with a *chosen* Inclination, cherishing Approbation or Persuasion, with a *cordial* Application corresponding, and effectual to the other Purpose; not to doubtful Disputation, but in a *pure Conscience*; *perceiving* who recommends, and commands, and for what Intention; *judging* how reasonable the Obedience, how incomparably excellent to its true Interest; *inferring* the necessary Duty, Salvation, Self-preservation, and eternal Happiness in it; resolving to cleave steadfastly to it, and hold it fast; and in that Resolution to profess it openly. And accordingly enter into publick Engagement and solemn Covenant so to do; plighting, renewing, and repeating Fœderal Faith and Personal Fidelity, to continue in that good Faith and do the good Works of it; so making that, which was obligatory before, still more uniformly obliging, and more constantly binding to the whole Behaviour; in order to be entitled to the inestimable Benefits and Promises of the New Covenant or Testament between God and sinful Man, founded in the Mediator of that Covenant, and Testator of that Testament, *Jesus Christ* our Lord and Saviour.

BESIDES as the great Archetype of Virtue, the Image of God in Man, consists in his Conformity more to the *Will* than the understanding Faculty

Faculty of God, it must be improved more here from the Virtues of *our Will*, than the Enlargement of our Understanding; which is rather our posthumous Privilege, than a necessary Duty in this imperfect State of Perception.

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IT is not the believing that the Nature of Virtue is so and so constituted, or consists in such or such Particulars, that ever makes a Man virtuous; or that Proposition, *that Jesus Christ is the Messiah*, which makes an upright Believer; unless it intentionally comprehends and is actually unfolded to his several Offices. *Burnet de Fid. & Off.* pag. 151, acknowledges *that* to be but an imperfect, and no more than an inceptive Principle of Christianity, and that the Need of a *Mediator, Intercessor, and Redeemer* is founded in the Degeneracy of human Souls. Nor does an Historical believing his Presence in the World, teaching Doctrines, working Miracles, Dying, Rising, Ascending to Heaven, *merely* as a matter of Fact, constitute the requisite Faith; for that is a mechanical Faith unavoidable in a Christian Country, more fully incident to the believing *Devils*, than to the Half-embracers and Half-rejecters of it upon Earth: Though they assent *strongly* and perceive so clearly, they perceive nothing in it, but the Inflammation of their own Doom, they judge and infer nothing but the eternal Despair of being the worse for the same, Cause enough to make them tremble; and is it not a devilish Folly for any, either by hating, or not using it, to make their Faith as fatal to themselves as it is to the other? Have *they* not Reason to tremble?

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IT is therefore, notwithstanding it is the *Gift of God* as to the Object of it *, *an active Persuasion of the Mind in a fruitful Application of that Means unto Virtue*, that makes it Virtue or Christian Faith; whether that Persuasion regards the different States of another World, more especially the Recompence of Reward, or Trust in God's Promises and Providences; or respects the Forgiveness of Sins, Acceptance of our Prayers and sincere Endeavours thro' the Mediator. If the Persuasion of the Mind regards the *Lawfulness* of an Action it is called Faith, and whatsoever religious Action is not of *that sort* of Faith, is Sin †; *to him that thinketh any Thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*. When a Man does what his well-inform'd Conscience tells him is unlawful, he is self-condemn'd and *self-divided*, which is an *internal Heresy*, let him be of what particular Church he pleases.

Now the End and Design of the Christian Institute of the Knowledge of Christ, or Faith in him as Mediator, being to *renew the Mind* in a better Knowledge of the Religion of the End, and an explicit Knowledge of the only true Religion of the Means, in order to regulate Man's whole Conversation in the Sight of God; and to effect that in the first Source of that Conversation, towards rectifying and governing the Will in its moral Choice and Election, and directing it in its Application of the Means to the End; the Treasures of the Wisdom of God in

* *Eph.* ii. 8. *1 Cor.* ii. and in many other Places stands for the Object, *Acts* vi. 7. *Rom.* i. 5. xvi. 26. iii. 27, 31. x. 6. *Gal.* i. 23. iii. 2, 23, 25. *Eph.* iv. 5. *1 Tim.* iv. 6.
† *Rom.* xiv. 23.

him are display'd to the Understanding as the most important Truth ; and the Will is likewise address'd to as the most important Interest. If the Proposal, in all its Neecessaries, is very plain, and the Understanding can't help perceiving and judging, that the Meaning of the Truth is moral, and the Design saving, it is by so much the greater Commendation of it, as it is not a Matter of Subtlety, but Sincerity and Honesty to be a Christian, which depends chiefly upon the Will ; tho' there is no Virtue in *physically* believing the Truth as Truth, which upon due Attention and Inquiry can't but be believed and assented to ; yet to believe and assent to it *morally*, and embrace it with the *Will*, is Virtue and Duty, and the very first Principle of Virtue. " For this Reason, Virtue, which is the proper Happiness and Perfection, is call'd ἀρετή, i. e. αἰρετή, a Name which hath great Affinity to a Word that signifies *eligible*, not only because Virtue is properly the Object, but also because it is the Effect of our own *Choice*." *Simplic. on Epict. c. i.*

As the Truth is an enlightning Principle of Piety, Virtue, and all Morality, the Will can help, as it too commonly does, receiving it to *that Use and Purpose*, whilst the Understanding could not help receiving and acknowledging it as Truth : And therefore when the elective Power of the Mind entertains and applies it as such, it must be its Virtue and Commendation ; and consequently not to do so, must be wicked and immoral : It is called *Mark vii. 22. ἀφροσύνη Foolishness*; destructive Imprudence ; when a Person knows better Things but follows them not, *which proceeds from the Heart and defiles the Man.*

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For Piety and Virtue being a moral Obligation upon the Will, as the indispensable Qualification of Man's Happiness; the Truth and Application of the Means, without which that Obligation can't be duly put in Practice, is morally obligatory upon the Will also: If one is a Duty, so is the other; if one is necessary, so is the other. Thus Truth in the Understanding distinguishing true Good from false, in the only true *Doctrine*, and *Instruction* of Happiness, (the chief Enquiry after Truth) is chosen, and embraced in the Aspect of being its *Good*, with a careful Regard to those Resolutions it would bring in, whereon Happiness depends, *i. e.* for *Reproof*, for *Correction* in Righteousness.

IF Faith is a Conclusion of a Syllogism for true Happiness, and that Conclusion, as such, depends in part upon the Understanding; then Faith consists in the *Fidelity* of all the Powers constitutive of the inward Man, Understanding, Will, and Affections, to Truth constitutive of Man's Happiness, called in *Luke viii. 15.* the *honest and Good Heart* (a Word that comprehends those three Faculties) *honest*, as void of Prevarication, free from Excuses, Self-delusion; *good*, as Self-determin'd to Self-Salvation, his own greatest Good, and to the Love thereof; and if the Excellency of it so much consists in *Fidelity*, it must certainly be a *moral Virtue*. In the Understanding that Fidelity becomes the *Guide of Life*; in the Intentions *Sincerity*; in the Affections *Purity*; in the Will a *Choice* and *Determination* cleaving to the *Reward* of Virtue. For as every Word and Deed derives its Character of Virtue before God, from the Bent and Preference of the *Will*; it is not the knowing, assenting, or approving

approving Duty in the Understanding that makes Virtue, but by reducing it into Practice by the effectual Determination of the Will. The Virtue then of these sort of Men, like the *Gnosticks* of old, seems to consist chiefly in *knowing*, decanting, and talking of it, and talking every body else out of the true Way to that, and Happiness. They appear contented Candidates for Heaven in the Province of Knowledge and Notion, desirous of no other Proficiency in Virtue, than the *scientifick* Stage of it, according to the Heathen *Lucilius*.

Virtus est hominis, SCIRE id, quod quæque habeat res.

Virtus, SCIRE, homini, rectum, utile, quid sit honestum,

Quæ bona, quæ mala item, quid inutile, turpe, honestum.

Virtus, quærendæ finem rei SCIRE, modumque

WHEN Faith is obedient to the End, as the Means and the moral Cause of producing it, whoever would obey the Religion of the End to the best of his Power, must conform to the Religion of the Means according as it falls into his Power, and arrives at his Knowledge: The moral Obligation to one is unquestionable, therefore the moral Obligation to the other should as little be brought in question, since Christianity has been proved to be a Scheme of the best Means to that End. Nor is it possible, duly considering the Nature of God, or Man, for any Man to assign a better, or any so well adapted, in itself, to the compassing of that End.

BUT what if *Faith* is the first Principle, and Basis of Natural Religion as well as reveal'd; and without it, there is a *moral Impossibility* of *pleasing God*? That *God is, and is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him*, is the Creed of Nature; and if a Believer in God does not exert his Faith to that moral Relation between God and Man, as a *Rewarder* of sincere Diligence in serving him, he cannot *possibly*, as it is very natural to imagine, be the Servant of God, or God be otherwise pleas'd with him.

THOUGH the Believer of God's Existence should be mistaken as to some of his natural Perfections, yet keeping his Faith and Reason up to the religious Aspect of being a *Rewarder*, that secures all his *moral* Attributes; and actually exerts them, in some indeterminate Manner, in his Government over Man. His *Veracity* in keeping *Promise*, whence the Notion of Rewarder implanted in Man's Reason had its Confirmation from Heaven from the Beginning, before *Adam* was turn'd out of Paradise; his *Mercy*, *Goodness*, and *Love*: And his being a *Punisher* necessarily included in the other, secures and exerts his *Holiness*, and *Justice* towards the Transgressor. And that lays an *implicit* Foundation for the Love and Fear of God, and all moral Obedience. And therefore they who reject the explicit, have nothing but *implicit* Faith to rely upon, which they take so much self-condemning Pains to deride. But the Author I reply to (more especially one of them) take a more effectual Step, and do the Work at once; in order to supplant Christianity, they subvert and tear Natural Religion up by the Roots; by rejecting God as a *Rewarder*,

warder, the general, common, natural Principle of all Virtue and Hope of Acceptance, they effectually reject all his moral Attributes, and cancel all moral and religious Obligation to him. CHAP. XVIII.

Now, does not *Christianity* reveal and unfold that Faith, and render it *explicit* in all those Particulars; *how*, and for what Reason, and upon whose Account, he is a Rewarder, and Pardoner, and Acceptor of our Worship, and Service; and *how* and in what prescribed Method of the Divine Wisdom all those moral Attributes are to have their governing Influence, and take Effect upon us? And if the other *implicit* Faith, wrapt up in Generals, was morally Obligatory, surely *this explicit* Faith must be much more so, as being so much more satisfactory, and particular. This gives an immediate adequate Explanation of the Bishop of Bangor (now Salisbury's) Passage of Sermon before the Society for propagating the Gospel as cited by the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. pag. 68. where the Gospel is stiled a *Republication of the Law of Nature*. I persuade myself his *Lordship* had these original Truths in his View when he express'd himself in that Manner, of which the other has taken such Advantage; with this Key, the Assertion bears quite another Meaning, than as it is used and adopted by that Author and brought into Title; for indeed the Gospel requiring Repentance in virtue of its Explanation of the first *Promise*, in its *Precepts* must be *declarative* likewise of that *original Religion*, of the End, which was as *old* as the *Creation*; the Breach of which Law of Nature was to be repented of.

AT the same Time we know and believe how God is a Rewarder, we know how is a *Punisher*; and if this Faith employ'd to its proper Ends is absolutely necessary, where-ever it is sufficiently reveal'd, to gain Acceptance with God and prevent the other Inconvenience; then it becomes Self-preservation, the Transgression of which Law is certainly a very great Sin: And I hope *Self-preservation* will be allow'd to be a *moral* and the first and greatest of the moral Virtues, tho' never once call'd so. So likewise Faith accomplishes its End of good Works, tho' not call'd a moral Virtue, is nevertheless, in the Nature of Things, the Head of all the moral Virtues, in the Religion of pleasing God. Therefore that Foundation must be false, That the Christian Revelation is only a Means of Information, without any Obligation of Believing*.

THUS Faith is the Beginning of cleaving unto † God, and one of the *weightier Things of the moral Law* ||, which must certainly be meant of Faith in God, and not towards Man, because the parallel Place varies it *the Love of God* ‡. Besides, all Laws, Human and Divine, when they oblige to the End, oblige, at the same Time, to the properest Means, in the Subject's Power, for answering the End, and punish for the Neglect. And when the Legislator, at any time, *enacts* and *requires* any particular, more explicit and effectual Means for advancing and securing the Law of the End, the Subject is par-

* The Foundation of that Book, *Christianity not Myste-
rious.*

† *Ecc.* xv. 12.

|| *Matth.* xxiii. 23.

‡ *Luke* xi. 42.

particularly and more especially oblig'd to a Compliance; because, in that Case, they become the only *legal* and *acceptable* Means for fulfilling the End. And when the Law of the Means does so plainly appear to the Subject, to be not only in Affirmance of the Law of the End, but entirely framed for, declaratively promotive of, and actually serviceable to the End; *Do we then, argues the Apostle, make void the [moral] Law thro' Faith? God forbid; yea, we establish that Law.* Whoever is honest and sincere in professing Obedience to this Law, will be as sincere and obedient in embracing the other, and for the sake of the Religion of one, love the Religion of the other; if he conscientiously holds to the one, he cannot in his Conscience despise the other.

BUT, to be sure, if he is false to the End, he will use all manner of Artifice to evade the Means. Or should he happen to doubt of the Law of the Means, and at the same Time affect to give out among his Neighbours, how true is he to the End! when he himself, and all his Neighbours see that Law has no other View, but the fulfilling the End, and must certainly for that Reason proceed from the same Fountain of Authority, the other took its Rise from: He must soon either lay aside his Doubts; or, if he should continue, and be troublesome with them, his Neighbour will solve them for him, and tell him a Truth he can't deny, that the true Reason of it is, because he disaffects and dislikes the End, at the Bottom of his Heart.

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THIS accounts for that Scripture, why *all Men have not Faith* *, i. e. have not an Inclination of Will or *orderly Disposition* of Heart to such wise and worthy Things, as *ordains* them, sets them in *order* to eternal Life : The Reason follows, because they are *unreasonable and wicked Men*, ἀποροί, absurd Persons, Reason-Haters, Truthless Creatures, upon whose Will the *Topics* of common Reason and Persuasion have lost their Influence ; from whom, as from incurable Adversaries to God, and their own Souls, it is therefore *pray'd to be deliver'd*. The Author of *Characteristicks* confesses, “ that the highest Good “ and *Happiness* must depend upon *right Opinion* †.” And must not that right Opinion necessarily extend to the *right Means* of attaining that highest Good and Happiness ?

To illustrate these Matters ; the Laws, since the *Reformation*, which established the *Protestant Religion* and the *English Liberties*, rather supposed, than served the Subjects with effectual Means for that End ; but they did the best they could with those imperfect Means ; till the happy *Revolution* came, which soon after settled (Thanks be to God the Protector of the Reformation for his good Providence, for the Majority of *one* Vote in one of the Houses !) the particular, explicit, effectual Means ever after for it, in the *present happy Settlement*. I ask then, though it was a Duty before for Men to do the best they could, are not all Subjects *now, particularly*, oblig'd to espouse, and adhere to this blessed, *explicit* Law of the Means, and that inviolably, and without

* 2 *Thef.* iii. 2.† *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 169.

any doubting? So, when the *Saviour* of the CHAP.
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World came to deliver Men from the Dominion and Slavery of the *Devil*, tied and bound as they were to him in the Chain of their Sins, and blinded moreover by him with horrid Delusions; were all the Natives of these Dominions as sensible of the Value of Liberty in one Case, as in the other (not to say how much one excels the other) or, of the Enjoyment of a much better Life from one Deliverance than the other, it could not fail, but that every Soul would be, and appear to be as well affected to *Jesus Christ*, as to the present Government, and think it a *Politeness* of Honour and good Sense of a *Briton* to be firmly attached to, and constantly well behaved towards him, paramount to all other Honour, to all other little Politeness: For this would retrieve the true gallant Politeness, consisting in general Humanity, Justice, Veracity, Love of Virtue, and public Spirit, all which endear and secure Society; and by degrees would polish off the *modern*, mean Politeness, which appears out of Season in a Protestant, and to the Dishonour of a Christian Nation, in *Falseness*, *Selfishness*, *licentious Opinions*, *Luxury* of several Sorts, a *Spirit of Infidelity*, and a *Multitude of Wants*; and to increase them the more, a *servile Imitation* of the worst failings of the *French*. One is a Civil Virtue for the Civil Life of a *British* Subject, the other is a moral Divine Virtue for a moral and divine Life, begun in inward Peace with God here, and consummated in eternal Blessedness hereafter.

AND if no Man can come to the Father but through him, the only appointed Mediator and Peace-maker, how can the *Rejecters* of him pretend to go to the Father, or expect any Peace with

CHAP. with him in this Life, or the next? The Father
 XVIII. however is willing to have those Incogitant Persons *saved*, but then he *wills* the Means also; and that is, by their *coming to the Knowledge of the Truth* of that only Means, and making proper use of it. It would well become the *Deist* therefore to consider, whether he will not become justly suspected of being a good Subject as well to one Government, as the other. For does he imagine, that the *present Administration* of these Realms does not understand its Interest better, than not to interpose in time, for preventing such Sentiments from enlarging into a *Fashion*, (the Law of which has more sway over the sociable Nature of most Men than the Laws of God, or the Magistrate) and for protecting the other Kingdom that is not of this World, as it is so exceeding serviceable to their own Kingdom, so long as it keeps clear from the Corruptions of *Irreligion* and *Popery*: but their Irreligion against *Christ*, wherewith they go on to infect such vast Multitudes, directly leads and paves the Way to the other, as I before amicably shew'd*; and that we all know is the Ruin of all.

I CAN'T imagine why they don't rather chuse to submit to the *Principal*, in time, rather than be ensnar'd, having the Snare in Sight, into a Submission to his *pretended Vicar*. Is not reasonable Virtue to both Governments better than Death-bed Repentance? The Design of King *Charles II's* Reign, according to a good Historian, "seem'd to be to make us first *Atheists*, in order to make us *Papists*." But do they think in their little Conscience that those evil Times are coming about again?

* Page 212, &c. of this Vol.

IF after this nothing can be added to shew the Wickedness of refusing Obedience to the Law of the Means, I shall have Occasion afterwards to demonstrate the Folly of it to those who are so wise in their own Conceit. Mean time, it may be proper to observe *how* those things come about. And this will open the several Steps of Folly, in Mens Treatment of this Law of the Means, *Faith in the Mediator*, in the Particulars before explain'd.

Now, it being agreed on all Sides, that this Faith carries with it a declar'd moral Obligation, and most divine Direction to *Purity and Holiness of Manners*, therefore call'd *holy* Faith; where there is, and for so long as there is an Irregularity, or Immorality in the Will as to that sort of Obedience to this Faith, in either not embracing it at all; or not as what it really is; or not putting it to its design'd Use; naturally produces a corresponding Conduct in the Understanding, to keep up some sort of outward Shew of Consistency, or some Kind of Sense of inward Peace and Quiet in the Agent, such as it is. Therefore a resolv'd Adherence in the one so commonly brings forth a Refusal of the other; a Corruption, or Latitude in one, a Corruption or Latitude in the other; a Neglect of the one, an Inconsideration of the other. Hence it comes to pass, in the Nature of Things, that some are *Rejecters*, others *Corrupters* by Principle; some *Doubters*, others careless *Neglecters* of it.

I. THE REJECTERS of this Faith are desired to examine their own Breasts, whether
some

CHAP. XVIII. some habitual Wickedness in Flesh, or Spirit, has not seiz'd upon their Wills, and warpt its Choice? as it is a great Pravity of Mind to act contrary to a known Duty, still resolving so to do, and they receiving the Knowledge of this same Faith as a Judgment impending over their Actions, breaking the Peace and Tranquillity within; whether in order to restore that Peace, and patch it up as well as they can, they do not really make a *Dupe* of their Understandings, purposely setting it to work to reverse that Judgment, by all the Witticisms, Lustre of Words, artificial Exceptions it is Master of; and the Spirit of Dispute (from which nothing is exempt) soon helps them to it, when it turns itself against the plainest Works, or Words of God, notwithstanding there is a peculiar kind of Self-Evidence in both of them; especially, if they can form any more agreeable Project from a Notion of God's Goodness with regard to the Pardon of Sin, which shall, at the same Time, be more easy and indulgent to Sin? This is a serious Truth, and it imports them to lay their Hand upon their Heart; because it can be proved upon them by Variety of Instances; and it is pity they should so greatly contribute and submit to the worst of deceit, Self-deceit, and yet be the last in the Kingdom that don't find it out.

IF they would please to study a little better the *Mystery of Iniquity*, how it is allow'd of, and cherish'd in their own Bosom; how it makes them such a Mystery, hid indeed to themselves, but sufficiently reveal'd to others; they would presently understand all the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. They would feel the first to be their Disease, and find the Mystery of
 Godliness

Godliness and of Faith for a pure Conscience to be their only Remedy; and the only safe Clew for leading Human Nature out of the Labyrinth They, and it are bewilder'd in. *That Secret of the Lord is with the Righteous* only, such as are righteously disposed to the Religion of the End, to such only does he shew his Covenant in the Mediator: That will shine out and comfort their Hearts as *the only sure and profitable Philosophy* *. It being the Design of the Gospel, in order to heal them freely, and friendly, to discover them to Themselves, and redeem them from Themselves, by redeeming them from all Iniquity of Flesh and Spirit; which tyrannizes over the Will and Affections, cheats and perverts the Understanding in its perceiving, judging, and inferring the things that make for its Peace, and belong to the true End and Interest of Man; at the same time, its Discernment and Acuteness in Civil Affairs is as bright as ever.

BUT whenever the Proffer of that salutary Design is seen and disliked, and the Service of Sin is still resolv'd upon, then the Will sends out its Commands to the Affections to *hate the Light*, that makes such disagreeable Discoveries; and at the same time Orders are issued out to the Understanding to use all its Arts in raising Objections, and crying it down as a Fiction, and give it all the foul Play of Ridicule; Arbitrariness in the Author of it; Nonsense, Contradiction in its Mysteries; Satire upon the Priests; Needlessness of the whole, and every Misrepresentation of every Part, that Partiality, Preju-

* Τάυτην μόνον εὐεισκόον φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ τε καὶ σύμφορον.
Just. M. Dial. cum Tryph.

CHAP. dice, and inveterate Enmity can suggest. And
 XVIII. all this for what? For no other Cause in the
 World, but *because their Deeds are Evil; the*
hidden things of Darkneſs loath Day and Diſ-
covery, nor can they endure to be moleſted in
their ſecret Faſtneſs. They hate the Sight of
their own evil Deeds, therefore hate the Light
which brings that Sight; the whole Courſe of their
Life reclaims againſt ſuch reforming Light, they
can't endure to come near it, or hear its Per-
ſuaſions with any Patience, tho' it is guilty of
no other Wrong towards them, but perſuading
them with all Tenderneſs and Reſpect, to for-
ſake thoſe evil Deeds that will be their Ruin.

P R E S E N T Conſcience being the preſent Opi-
 nion a Man has of his own Actions *, it comes
 to paſs that Faith and Works mutually match,
 and juſtify each other in their Choice of one
 another. If there is a wrong Choice of Works,
 there will be a wrong, yet ſuitable Choice of
 Faith; and if the Will ſuffers not the Deeds to
 ſquare with the Faith, the holy Faith muſt either
 buckle to the Deeds, or be baniſh'd quite away
 from the Obſervation of thoſe Miſdeeds. As the
 Sight of the Eye depends upon the right Diſpo-
 ſition of the Organ, ſo the Judgment of the
 Man depends upon the inward State, Condition,
 and Diſpoſition of his own Mind; which ſees,
 argues, and judges of Objects, Things, and
 Perſons, juſt as it is *diſpoſed* and ſtands *affected*.

* Tho' Conſcience is an internal Judge of Man's Actions,
 yet, like all other Judges, it ought to judge and determine
 according to Rule and Law preſcribed to it, and not pretend
 to be a Rule and Law to itſelf: Still the Opinion and preſent
 Underſtanding of the preſcribed Law governs the Man; but
 whilſt it governs, is obliged to *learn* and *ſtudy* its Duty, as a
 Judge.

So

So the Badness of the Deeds having got the Mastery over the Will, the reasoning Faculties are set to work to get Mastery over the Faith; a prompt willing Undertaking to get rid of a Belief which they can't think of without Pain! The Pain of parting from their Lusts, or the Grief of not being able to enjoy them under that Belief. And having play'd the Fool in being a Slave to their Sins, must needs be so wise to give the World a Reason to justify themselves in Print; to make a Party, and gather the Votes of such as are as bad, or worse inclin'd than themselves.—They animate one another.—Thus practical Infidelity becomes so fruitful a Source of speculative controversial Infidelity; which is making bad worse, and doubling the Folly, by standing to it, and rendring themselves incurable, and unpersuadable; unless, perchance, some Remains of Honour and Ingenuity are left to read and weigh the Arguments on both Sides; there being Shelter in *Deism* for Sin, and several flattering Covers for Iniquity, but none at all in real honest Christianity: They who would lessen the Civil War in their own Breasts, whilst they are determin'd to have Pleasure in sensual Irregularities, are therefore easily proselyted to have no Pleasure in the Truth as it is in *Jesus Christ*.

BUT the Mischief grows desperate by persevering long to have no Pleasure in that Truth for the Amendment of Life; for the God of that Truth, not caring to be mock'd for his Kindness, turns the Mock upon them, and gives them up *to believe a Lie*, that they may be damned to gnashing of Teeth, 2 *Thef.* ii. 10,

CHAP. &c. *For this Cause*, (because they received not the Love of the Truth *that they might be saved*) God sends strong Delusions that they should believe a Lye, that they all may be damn'd who believe not the Truth, but have Pleasure in Unrighteousness, ἐν τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, i. e. in Falshood (the Opposite of it) for being unjust and false to the most instructive saving Truth. Do they pretend to be an Exception to that common Human Falacy, *facile credimus quod volumus*? Do they deserve to have Eyes, or the Use of Eyes, who hate the Light of the Sun? This judicial Blindness as to moral and spiritual Truth, is evident. both from the Nature of Things, and Matter of Fact. For the Will controuling all, and that being bent upon Works of Darkness, the Understanding is made a Vassal and a Pimp to its iniquitous Purposes, and so by long Slavery loses its Distinctions and Direction in moral, or divine Things; puts *Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness*; its natural Power of judging what is fit to be believed is inverted, and the Will takes its Place, and believes what it pleases; which accounts for another Passage, *By bearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive*. The evil Heart of Unbelief with regard to enlightning directive Truth, is naturally addicted to believing the reverse, which is the Lye, or Darkness; and so being persuaded of the Lye, what is utterly false in Nature, and ruinous withal in its Consequences, it shall become a *moral*, but a stupid senseless Truth to them; and so by long continued Prevarication, and Unfaithfulness to the Light of Truth, Darkness and Light shall be both alike to them. When the Will leads the Understanding, it is a Wickedness punish'd with Blindness; when the Understanding

Understanding directs and advises the Will according to the best of its Knowledge, attainable in its present Circumstances and Opportunities, and happens to mistake, the Mistake is innocent. So far, in the Nature of Pravity incident to human Faculties, is it from being true, “ That “ Men can no otherwise believe than as things “ appear to them,” as before cited.

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FOR Christianity would appear quite another thing to its Opposers, if they would lay aside Prejudice, Partiality, and interfering Interest arising from Indulgence of vicious Habits ; those Hindrances being wilful and of their own chusing, they are guilty of chusing not to let it appear as what it is ; and if they say they see it as it really is, and not receive it, their Sin remaineth. And that Saying will be verifi'd, if the Gospel, after it is so reveal'd, is hid, *it is hid only to those that are lost*, to all Reception of it : And also that other, *None of the WICKED shall understand, but the Wise shall understand* * ; their Mind grows *reprobate*, or *undiscerning*, as in the Original. † *Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.* ‡

AND this is confirm'd by History, and Matter of Fact. Our Saviour told the *Jews*, *ye will not come to me that ye might have Life* || : Their Unbelief lay in their *Will*, and proceeded from it, they were so unreasonably then, and to this Day, lost in Perverseness and Obstinacy, no otherwise accountable, but as above-mention'd, that nothing that then appear'd

* Dan. xii. 10.

† Rom. i. 24.

‡ Tim. iii. 13.

|| John v. 40.

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before their Understanding could convince it; no, not the Sight of Miracles. They are so notorious an Instance, it need not be insisted upon; nor yet our Lord's Declaration, that the Miracle of one rising from the Dead would be ineffectual to convince a resolv'd Infidel, set against the Faith of Revelation. This has been often urged, with great Advantage. But if they won't believe that, they will, 'tis hop'd, give Credence to a Dictate of Reason and common Experience from one of their own *Moralists* and Apostles, that irregular Pleasure is a Cause of Infidelity, and *corruptive of Principles of Reason*. * However they can't refuse Belief to their own Oracle, the noble Author of *Character*. when he says, "*There is a certain perverse Humanity in us [Deists] which inwardly resists the Divine Commission, tho' ever so plainly reveal'd*" †; it respects a particular Instance, but is no less true, from him, with regard to the whole Revelation.

HERE is the Secret of *Deism* blabb'd out by one of the subtlest Opposers of Revelation that ever wrote. It is not the want of sufficient Evidence to make it plain and incontestable, nor of its appearing plainly so to the Understanding of *Deists*; but a certain *perverse Humanity* within them that makes them resist; and they *pervert* that Humanity within them, if not always, and in all Persons among them, thro' a libertine criminal Sensuality; yet by an Iniquity of *Spirit*, a bloated Filthiness, and fastidious Swelling that is worse; as being more obstinate and perverse

* *ἡ διαρρηγὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν*. Aristot.
pag. 358.

† Vol. I.

in its very Nature, and harder to be recover'd
to submit to any Conviction.

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BUT this their Iniquity of *Spirit* is no less contrary to the Law of Nature, and the old Philosophy, teaching Men their own Unworthiness, and Ignorance, than is the former. Both are wide Deviations from the Religion of the End, and equal Falacy as to any pretence to Virtue; *if a Man love Righteousness, her Labours are Virtues, for she teacheth Temperance and Prudence, Justice and Fortitude*, Wisd. viii. 7. And Iniquity of Spirit strengthens itself in false Notions of the Nature of God as Governor of the World, and also in over-conceited Opinion of the Capacity of Human Reason, Self sufficiency and Independance upon God, (tho' an independent Creature is the greatest Absurdity in Nature) indulg'd Arrogances of Spirit will as soon turn a Man into a *Devil*, as Gratifications of Appetite will into a Brute; and render the Man more mischievous upon Earth than any Brute. Spiritual Libertines have as much to answer for, as Sensual; but seem to have the most deadly Disease upon them: I mean, a *moral Apoplexy*, occasioned by the great *Redundance* of bloating Sufficiency. And as this Sufficiency and Fulness of SELF, sets itself in Opposition to humble Self-Knowledge and Self-Government, and renounces Dependance upon God for Knowledge or Conduct; it must be most destructive to Man, and no less hateful to God: It must be the most pernicious and fatal of all Schemes both to the Honour of God, and Good of Men.

IT is not one of your intermitting Vices, such as Wrath, Drunkenness, Lust, Gluttony,

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which have some lucid Intervals, and leave the Sinner some Seasons to recollect and recover himself to better Practice; but this Disease is of the *unintermitting* Kind, a *continued* high Fever of Soul, *always* thinking more highly of *Self*, than ought to be thought, less respectfully to God's Honour, and submissively to his Ways with Mankind; deflowers God of his Glory, and lays waste the Salvation of Self, and Good of Mankind. Perverse *Obstinacy*, *Inconsideration*, *Haste*, *Anticipation*, *Partiality*, *Presumption*, particular *Envy*, groundless *Aversion* and *Prejudice*, unreasonable *Bigotry* or *Fondness*, have as malign perverting Influence upon the Understanding as the more immediate Lusts of the Flesh *. *Isaiah* xxix. 9. represents the *Jews* as *drunken*, but not with *Wine*; they stagger'd, but not with strong drink; and the Apostle lays in the Caution of being *sober-minded*, which supposes that there is spiritual Drunkenness and filthy Irregularities in the Mind, whereof the Body has no share.

BUT nothing more than the Pride of *Genius*, which delights to parade in a Superiority of Understanding, by censuring, and endeavouring to pull down what the united Wisdom of the Publick has approved of, and concurs in submitting to, as most reasonable and beneficial to the Community. This is the judicious Observation of the Bishop of *London*; his Words are,

* “ *Pride* and *Revenge* are Immoralities within; which bend the Mind as strongly as any other *Vices* in the World. “ *Personal Prejudice* will often put a Bias upon it, as powerful as *Debauchery*: and *Pique*, and *Resentment*, will hinder “ Eye-sight itself; and turn the plainest *Evidences* into “ Doubts, and often into Fallshoods, with the Man that is “ actuated by them.” Present Bp. of *Winchester*'s Tracts, pag. 463.

“ Others

“ Others are led by *Pride* and *Self-conceit*, to
 “ raise Doubts and Disputes concerning any
 “ Opinions and Doctrines which are generally
 “ receiv’d and establish’d, how evident soever
 “ it may be, that the Doctrines they oppose are
 “ agreeable to all the Principles of Virtue in ge-
 “ neral, and of Christianity in particular. Such
 “ Mendiscdain to think in the *common* Way, and
 “ valuing themselves upon a more than ordinary
 “ Share of Knowledge and Penetration, do al-
 “ ways affect Novelty and Singularity in Opi-
 “ nion. Which *opposing* Humour was well ex-
 “ press’d by one of our modern Advocates for
 “ Infidelity, in what he is reported to have said
 “ of one of his Fellow-labourers to this effect,
 “ *That if his own Opinions were establish’d to-day,*
 “ *he would oppose them to-morrow.*” *Past. I. p. 7,*
 8. So sweet and intoxicating withal is the pre-
 heminance of *leading* a Party, tho’ in the wrong,
 and to an ill end, and thro’ labyrinths of Error!

THIS dissatisfied Spirit of *opposing* the Divine
Establishment in Heaven, among the several Or-
 ders of Beings, seems to have been the Sin of
 the *Angels* that fell, and found no Repentance;
 but it is the Prayer of Christians, that these Men
 may repent, in time. Mean time, their oppo-
 sing Spirit is punish’d with the notorious Guilt
 of Self-contradiction and Inconsistency; and
 they have been able to produce no other Proof
 of the Self-sufficiency of their Reason, than the
Defect of Reason, and *minute* Philosophy in
 Abundance, with a notorious Design of sub-
 verting the Religion of Nature they pretend to
 favour, and levelling every thing to *Atheism*.

Now, was there any thing in Christianity
 really opposite to Natural Religion, or inju-
 rious

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rious to Morality, the Zeal of the *Deists*, Subjects of *Great-Britain*, would be commendable in opposing the Religion of their Country. But if the whole is calculated purely in subserviency, and for the Promotion of that End; if the Religion of the Means has that old Religion of the End for the Object of its Improvement, to carry it on to its utmost Perfection, by all the Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps that were wanting: If it lays no Restraint upon the Appetites, and Passions, but what the Law of Reason laid before, and nothing is condemn'd by that, but what this joins in the condemnation of: If there is no Pain in its Repentance and Self-denial, but what is absolutely necessary, and must be undergone for cure of that Disease Men feel within themselves; and that extraordinary Self-denial, and Loss in times of *Persecution*, carries its *peculiar* Recompence with it; *an hundred-fold* in this Life present, *i. e.* Joy and Satisfaction of Mind in suffering in so good and so recompensing a Cause, an hundred times better than all the Possessions of the World; and in the World to come Life everlasting in a distinguish'd Sphere of Felicity: If in its genuine Observance, it both constitutes, and prolongs the Happiness of every Individual, and of every Community; how sadly, how self-convictedly do they act in Contradiction to themselves as rational Creatures, pretending Friendship to the End, and yet justifying Enmity and fierce Opposition to the best Means for carrying it on; tho' it is not only a Maxim of the Law of *England*, but of common practical Reason all the World over, *Qui adimit medium, dirimit Finem*: tho' not one of them are able to deny; and the Author of *Christianity as old*,
 &c.

&c. in particular, confesses it, * a MEANS to that End? With what shameful Contradiction do they behave to the Duty of Subjects, in labouring to subvert the Religion of their Country, (wherein the Happiness of us all is involved) and so bring in Confusion and Misery?

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Now if the Thoughts of so many Absurdities, big with Mischief, are irrational, and disloyal, what is the wretched Fact, what Name is there for the zealous bigotted Endeavour, but consummate Wickedness? deserving, at least, Abhorrence of every wise Man, and faithful Subject, from coming into their Measures, at any rate, or under any colour of giving any Countenance to a Conspiracy against yours, and mine, and every body's general Happiness now, and hereafter? And if this Religion of the Means has been shewn to be a perfectly reasonable Service in all its Branches, and agreeable in all its Symmetries to the Nature of Things, as known by Reason, and discover'd by Revelation; what wretched Philosophers, as well as bad Citizens, are these Men? What poor Creatures are they in moral Sense, and honest good Reason, directive to the Honour of God, and Good of Men.

FOR, if the Religion of the End is universally necessary to the Good of Men, by the Voice of Nature; is it not for the Honour of God, is it not his peculiar Favour, to publish the Knowledge of the Means, as to his Wisdom seemeth best? If that Religion of the Means is actually made publick, or said to be so, that obliges to a due Enquiry, and that necessitates an effectual Com-

* p. 390, and several other Places.

pliance.

pliance. If the Means are of *his* appointing, who can change them; or dare to substitute others in their Room? And if the Religion of the End cannot be perform'd, nor will be accepted in a Christian Nation, without the other; for any to apostatize from such Means is, in other Words, to apostatize from the End, subvert Natural Religion, and so destroy what they build, or pretend to build, with their own Hands. As I have abundantly shewn with respect to the ablest and acutest of these Adversaries, in his *Inquiry concerning Virtue*.

THESE Men indeed talk of the Law of Nature, Benevolence, Love of God and Virtue, &c. but it is nothing, as I have shewn, but *Talk* and *Pretext*, to pull down Christianity, and, with that, root up Natural Religion. For what signifies pretending to the End whilst they wilfully divest themselves of the Means? No *Day*, no *Place*, no *Person* for *publick Worship*: Therefore it can be no Religion of the End, to them, since they never meet together, in a religious Way, to carry it on; God is only a private Notion, not a *publick* God to them. And if they hold Communion with *Christians*, they hold it in dishonourable Hypocrisy.

BUT if they will turn to the End with an upright Heart, which God, long-suffering in Mercy, grant they may, they will taste the divine Truth and admire the Reasoning of our blessed Lord: *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God.*
* If ye will perform the Religion of the End, and

* 1. *Joh. vii. 17.*

receive the Means, ye may be *added to the Church*, but not otherwise; for the Church of Christ is nothing else but the true Means to that End; (and in Fact of History, as many as did believe Remission of Sins, in the Name of *Jesus*, and receive him as the Means of acceptable Repentance and Prayer, were actually added unto the Church under the Character of *τοὺς σωζομένους* *the Saved*, or might be saved, in virtue of their own wise Choice and Preference; rather than any modern Notion of a Divine Decree of the *Many*, *i. e.* Number of those destined to it.) The *Doctrine* was purposely ordain'd and came from God, to enable Men to perform his Will the better, to give them Repentance towards God, gain them Pardon for their Sins, Access and Acceptance to their Prayers, and Peace and Joy to their sincere Endeavours of Duty; the Joy of serving God with a quiet mind; which all the *Learning* in the World could never have discovered (as is plainly supposed in the Words, being an Answer to that Question, *How knoweth this Man Letters, having never learned?*) if that Doctrine and Teaching had not descended from the Father of Lights, the God of all Mercy and Comfort. And where he wills the End to be performed more perfectly, he reveals and wills the Means.

IF therefore any Man wills the End in the Honesty of his Heart, he of course wills the Means with the same Honesty; and whenever he has that Will to *both*, his Knowledge of the Doctrine of the Means is in a manner prevented; upon the first Enquiry he is prepar'd to receive, he is *ordain'd* or *set in order* to eternal Life; neither is his Heart slow of believing, Faith flows

CHAP. flows in with ease, without Hesitation, and with
 XVIII. great Joy. He sees the Doctrine of the ME-
 DIA TOR to be perfectly harmonious to the
Nature of God, and Man ; but, what is greater
 in it, to be the great Prop and Consolation of
 the drooping guilty Life of Man ; he receives
 his Sacraments as his Helps and Comforts ; he
 glories in the afforded Aids, and Instruments :
 his Uprightness and Sincerity triumph in the
 Certainty of the Resurrection, looking for the
 Day of Judgment ; and to the Day of his Distribu-
 tion of Rewards and Punishments, as the great
 Principle of Conscience, the chief Interest, the su-
 preme Happiness he has in View ; and both ob-
 serves and remits his Duty with respect to all the
 Prohibitions, and the several Commandments, to
 be crown'd at that Day. Being truly attach'd
 to the Morality of the End he has a feeling
 Sense within him, which none but such can have,
 beyond the Acuteness of the most learned Evil-
 doer, in seeing the moral Use and Divine Evi-
 dence of the Means to be incontestably good,
 and true, because the Means themselves are so,
 to his own Knowledge ; he instantly despises the
 little affected Exceptions of the other, and
 knows where the Objection sticks, let them say
 what they will : he brings a Mind to the Gospel
 full of the Design of the Gospel, and therefore
 it clearly opens itself to such a Mind, and de-
 lights it ; he hears the Overtures, knows the
 Voice, comes to it, and finds Pasture ; whilst
 the other makes a thousand Excuses, all resol-
 vable into one, “ none so deaf as those who
 “ won't hear.”

HE *that is of God*, and holds not that natu-
 ral Truth in Unrighteousness, *heareth God's*
Words ;

*Words ; ye therefore bear them not, because ye are not of God ; if ye believe in him to any purpose, ye will believe also in me ; but he that has, and cherishes the Spirit of Unrighteousness, will, for so long, cherish the Spirit of Anti-Christ, or Resistance to the Gospel, in himself ; and that Man, throughout all Ages of it, will ever want Integrity towards its Truths, who is defective in his Integrity towards its purifying Design. It will never carry Evidence with it, whether internal or external, sufficient to convince and profelyte such a Person ; tho' that Evidence was double to what it is, was that possible. But, if he is sincere and acts the Part of the Gentleman upon Honour, in his Declaration for fulfilling the Law of Nature, he will be altogether Christian, and look upon Christ as the greatest Friend to that most honest pacifick Project, that ever yet visited this World : as being, in every thing of his prescribing, the sole perfect, the only effectual Means for bringing it to any Effect ; and from listening to him, become an Instance of the Truth of his divine incontestable Assertion, *He that is of God, beareth God's Words.* For this is, doubtless, the most usual Way of his opening the Heart of those who hear his Gospel ; and there is both Virtue and Piety in assenting to such a perspicuous Proposition, and embracing such evident Means ; because the Evidence and Perspicuity are ratified in the Virtue and Piety of the End they promote. Such Means therefore are certainly to be earnestly and worthily contended for, if it was only for the sake of such a worthy End.*

IF any Man therefore is averse to the doing the Will of God, too much to be avow'd openly ;

ly ; or if indifferent to it, in Principle, he has the Disposition of an *Author* within him, to declare upon *Principle* (as he of *Christianity* as old, &c. every where does) that the Means are not obligatory, but *arbitrary, indifferent, needless* Things ; which is filing a Declaration before God, and all the World, against himself, and all his Disciples, what little respect they bear to the End ; too shameful for them to own ! but, at the same time, too evident to be denied ! If therefore they know themselves to be such notorious Hypocrites as to the End, it is no wonder they are seen to be Unbelievers, or which is the same Thing, in other Words, Hypocrites in their Objections to the Means ; and the Parity of divine Justice in allotting one and the same *Portion* to *Unbelievers* and to *Hypocrites*, * is admirably exact, as well as very terrible.

THEY have been often put in Mind of the Danger, and Justice of the Damnation hanging over their Heads ; from that I desist, having sufficiently shewn the *Immorality* of their Unbelief ; that answers my Purpose in speaking to the Rejecters of this Faith.

II. There are CORRUPTERS of the Faith. For this being a new explicit Principle for controuling all irregular Practice, when the Practice will not be controul'd by it, it naturally becomes disaffected to the other, either in whole, or in part. If it cannot for Shame wholly throw it off, it will, out of Favour to the indulg'd Irregularity, try Ways and Means to corrupt, or new model it, so, as there shall be, at least to

* *Luke. xii. 46. Matt. xxiv. 51.*

their Imagination, a better Understanding between one and t'other. Either Ignorance of Scripture, filthy Lucre, Lust of forbidden Pleasure, of Party Honour, and secular Ambition of a Sect, or some sinister View, as it predominates, takes the Chair; and dictates to the Principle, " You cannot be my Guide unless " you bend and dispense so and so, it must be " done ; I shall not disown you, if you do not " me : I perceive how it may be done." Thus Corruption begins in Principle, and spreads by Argument, and Men side with it, as they find the evil Disposition within towards Works of the Flesh terminating in this Life, like to be favour'd by it. For the Head of all *Heresy* is *Carnality*, or *Earthiness*. *Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis acescit*. What tho' it occasions some Self-condemnation within, no Mortal can detect that ; if the Principle is stuck to in Appearance, the *Name* of Faith remains, that saves Appearances, and that is enough.

AND that has ever been done, by introducing *new unscriptural* Terms into the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints ; for the defeating of which, Councils have been able hitherto to find out no better Method, at least they have tried no other, than piously to superadd to the Faith other *antagonist* Terms, not so much because they are to be met with in Scripture, as because they import a Meaning effectually contrary, and preservative against those Expressions and Sentiments, which first began the Innovation.

AND so it will ever be, that corrupt Manners, in part resolv'd upon in some Instance or other, will ever be resolv'd upon a *corrupt Creed* to sup-

CHAP. port them. For Instance, the more the *Great-*
 XVIII. *ness* of the Person, whom God sent into the
 World to take away Sin and give it Life, is
 lessen'd and degraded ; the more that, by a di-
 rect Tendency, lessens our Notion of God's
Hatred of Sin ; our Perception of his *Love* of
 the World ; and our *Confidence* of Access, and
 Acceptance ; of *Remission of Sins*, and *eternal*
Life ; and consequently, the corresponding Prac-
 tice depending upon the Influence of those
 Truths, will all be proportionably lessen'd and
 abated, *i. e.* our *Aversion* and *Avoidance* of
Sin, our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God ; our *Re-*
pentance will be more slow and indifferent, and
 our *Devotion* colder and less frequent. So that
 whoever espouses these *Diminutions* of Virtue as
 his Choice, is violently inclined, and too often
 carried up and attach'd in Creed by way of Justi-
 fication, to the *lessening*, *degrading* Notions of the
Son of God. Tho' it is plain they ought not to
 use such Liberty, seeing in reality the End
 of such Liberty, however cloak'd over with
 Words, is a *Cloak of Maliciousness* ; there is Ma-
 lice at the Bottom against the full Extent of the
 Commandments regarding the Religion of the
 Means for perfecting the Religion of the End,
 at the same time they continue to compliment
 and flatter the Commands regarding the last.

My present Subject confines me to consider
 such only, as has a near Affinity to what I have
 been treating of. Such is the Extreme of some,
 who by Principle receive the Faith, and yet in
Principle degrade it of its proper Rank, and
 Subordination ; and depress it even below the
 Use and Service of a *Means*, making little or
 nothing of it ; which is a very heinous and most
 dan-



dangerous Departure from the Truth, denying and diminishing it from what it *really* is in its Station.

Obedi, & credidisti, is a famous Socinian Maxim ; and again Socinus disparages it at a very low Rate. “ Faith as it applies Assent of
“ the Understanding to the Truths of the Gos-
“ pel, is not of necessary Obligation, but a kind
“ of Ornament at best, rather than Matter of
“ real Use ; admit it brings some small Advan-
“ tage with it, yet the Want or Absence will be
“ attended with no great Inconvenience ; you
“ may say of it, as one did of the Art of Poetry,
“ *Si adest laudo, si abest non multum vitupero* ;
“ what is said of Meats may be said of that,
“ 1 Cor. viii. 8. it commendeth not to God,
“ neither if we believe are we the better, neither
“ if we believe not are we the worse, *modo vitæ*
“ *sanctimonia salva sit.*” *

* *Edward's Preservative*, Part III. p. 35. See more of these Sentiments, in *Reland's Critical Reflections on Mahometanism and Socinianism*, p. 236. And it is pretty observable what the same Author, p. 204, remarks of the Apostate Emperor Julian, that he embraced the Sentiments of *Aetius* (whilst he was a Christian) which consisted in Opinions very little differing from *Photianism*, i. e. *Socinianism*. So near is the Affinity, and so easy the Transition or Apostasy from *Socianism* to *Deism*. The *Rational Catechism*, and most of their Writings I have met with, drop all use of Christ as a Mediator, &c. and the very mention of a *New Covenant*, which is the most certain original Foundation of Christianity. Tho' some of their Books retain the mention of Christ as Mediator of Intercession in Heaven, yet was it possible for God, who never does an improper Thing, to appoint a mere Man in their Sense, to be Mediator there, he could be no more in the Nature of Things, than an incompetent, partial, half Mediator, as I have before shewn in the *first Vol.* and without Omniscience and Omnipresence to the Hearts of all Men, could not be capable of discharging the Office of Mediator *ex parte*.

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BUT this is arguing upon a most absurd, preposterous Supposition, putting the Effect before the Cause, and making it independent of it; gathering Fruit without a Tree; and recommending Virtue without any Principle of Virtue. For tho' it is never so true, that the Excellency of Faith, and the Value of all reveal'd Knowledge is to be estimated from its Design and Tendency to better Mens Repentance, Prayers, and Practices; and the Measure of Errors to be regarded from its Tendency to corrupt and spoil any of these (*Immorality*, transgressing the Religion of the End, being certainly the greatest *Heresy*, and a *Self-condemnation* by Nature;) yet it does not follow, that the End can be accomplish'd *without* competent Means, or a moral Effect be produced without a moral Cause. If the End is perverted and in danger of being lost thro' the Perversion and Deadness of the natural Means; and those Means are quickned with new Life and Soul, new principled with Acceptance and Aid from Heaven, and invigorated with Efficacy, Strength, and Alacrity of moral Operations; and all these proceed from *this Faith*, it must be obligatory and necessary, where it is presented, and known to be given for that End, that moral Effect of good Works, because that End is obligatory and necessary.

MORE especially, since God, who never does any thing in vain, has so expressly *commanded* this Faith in the *Mediator*, and indispensably connected it to that very End; we may be as morally certain of the Truth and Meaning of that Command, as of the Truth of the End. I acknowledge that when the End of the World comes, Faith vanishes; but as long as that is adjourn-

ed, I affirm, this must subsist in full Force and Virtue. It is an unaccountable Perverseness, and no less Inconsistency to receive and own the Revelation, where the Command is every where so plain, and yet declare it not obligatory. I have before prov'd at large *, that it is not an arbitrary Command for commanding sake, but carries its Reason with it; that Faith in *Christ* as *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, renders him the *fittest* and *ablest* MEDIATOR, every way, that can be conceiv'd by human Reason; and how that Faith *presides* over all the Means, and by a moral Operation adjusted to a moral Agent, carries with it the Power of the most Divine Persuasion for regulating and improving the Natural Religion of the Means, Repentance, and Prayer, with proper Efficacy and Acceptance for perfecting the Religion of the End, to the saving of the Soul.

NATURE may rebel against *Principle*, but where there is no *Principle* to controul the Rebellion, there can be nothing but Anarchy with all the Licentiousness of Mis-rule. A Man may sometimes be worse than his Belief and recover himself; but it is as impossible for him ever to be better, as for the Stream to rise higher, or be better in Quality, than its Fountain-head. Health and Poison may as well consist together, in the same Constitution, as the safe Way to Salvation, and a wilful Corruption of the Faith of Christ in a meditated Departure from its true Use and Application for working out our own Salvation.

* Throughout the *first Volume*.

CHAP. ACCORDING to Natural Religion, the
 XVIII. Principle of Virtue is the seeking to please
 God by our Actions, in the Belief of his being a
Rewarder of those that do so. That as we
 receive our Being and Powers of Action from
 him, so we are to receive our Happiness also
 from his rewarding Hands: *Without this Faith*
it is impossible to please him. Consequently, Vir-
 tue, or Works, are no longer Works, than as
 they are actuated by, and done in Virtue of
 that Faith; nor will Faith be any longer Faith,
 than as it produces, and is bent upon producing
 Works: and Works so perform'd receive their
 Virtue and Power of pleasing from that Faith;
 whilst Faith itself is nothing at all without the
 other: but with them, makes them what they
 ought, or pretend to be, an Act of Religion.
 This is the Tree that Virtue grows upon; nor
 can there be any Fruits of true Virtue, in any
 Place of the Earth, without this Tree.

Now it has appear'd before that this Faith in
 God as a *Rewarder*, as general and implicit as
 it is, includes Faith in the *Mediator*, and secures
 all the moral Attributes concern'd in that glo-
 rious Œconomy; and therefore may serve, when
 duly kept up to, and reason'd upon, to please
 God, who is no Respector of Persons, in any
 part of the Earth. But as that Faith, thro' the
 Favour of God, in all Christian Nations, espe-
 cially *Protestant*, is become so very explicit, and
 so very particular in all the Offices of a Media-
 tor, it obliges Men, as they explicitly believe
 in God, so also to believe *explicitly* and *particu-
 larly* in the Mediator, in each of those his Offi-
 ces, as before explain'd. And when God, who
 before commanded the Action, comes after-
 wards,

wards, to any People, and explicitly, and most exprefly and very preffingly commands the MANNER of the Action, and in that manner difplays a *Cornucopia* of the moft convincing Arguments of entire Reconciliation, in Method and Manner of pleafing him; if the *Manner* fo publifh'd, and indifpenfably infifted upon, obliges, as well as the Action, (it being fo neceffary to comply with the *eftablifh'd* Forms in Courts of Law and Equity, that all is rejected without it) they, who offer to rebel againft the *Manner* of the Action, rebel againft the Action itfelf, and make it of none effect to themfelves. Their Virtues may truly be call'd *splendida peccata* (tho' the fame Virtues in a Heathen Country are not fo) being wilfully deftitute of the known Principle of Virtue; where it is refractory to *Chrift*, it cannot be pleafing; where it is ignorant of him, it may be acceptable to God; and the Mediator, who died for all Men, may be their unknown Friend and Interceffor.

BUT how fhould he regard thofe who have little or no Regard to his greateft Kindnefs, his Death, and Interceffion? If that Tree of Chriftian Virtue is corrupt, the Fruit muft be the fame; and the only Way to mend the Fruit, is to mend the Tree in its Property of bearing what is acceptable to the Divine Majefty. The Tree is *Truth*, from Heaven, and the Fruit is *Holinefs* in all its Branches. But if the Tree is fplit in halves (by denying the Divine Nature of the *Mediator*) and that half fubdivided by the *Socinians*, how fhould Chriftian Fruit be expected? And therefore the *modo vitæ fanctimonia falva fit*, is a fanctified Pretence, and mere Cant; a Ruination of Virtue, and of themfelves too, if they perfift

CHAP. therein. Just such another false Courtship,
 XVIII. fawning Friendship, and flattering Admiration
 of its Beauty (in beautiful Language and meretricious Dress of Words, as most Flattery is made up of) as the Author of *Inquiry concerning it* professes; whilst at the same time he secretly stabs it to the Heart, depriving it of its greatest Recommendation, and most intrinsick Value of pleasing God, by a dutiful Oblation, Humility, and Dependence upon him, as a *Rewarder*; which is the true Principle of Virtue, and has been so from the Foundation of the World, and that is *Faith*; and may be call'd its κτήμα αἰώνιον, and the Foundation of all acceptable Religion, Natural, or Reveal'd. Which being a dependent expectant Thing, Man is guided in either of them, by the Notion and Belief he has imbib'd of God that corresponds to it; and one of the *Ancients* accordingly makes that *suitable becoming Faith and Estimation of God the Basis, and Foundation of all Virtue* *; another the most *sovereign Regulator of all Godliness*. † Society in this World and the next makes the Happiness of Man in both; Law makes Society; and the Sanctions of Rewards and Punishments makes Law; which shews the Difference and affords right Notions of Governor and Governed, Creator and Creatures, God and Man.

III. THERE are DOUBTERS of this Faith, *Scepticks* by Principle. I would observe a few Things of the unreasonable, absurd Conduct of

* Βάσιν γὰρ οἶμαι καὶ ἐδραῖωμα εἶναι πασῶν τῶν ἀρετῶν ἀμολύσαντες θεῶν δοξάν τε καὶ πίσιν. Orig. Dial. I. p. 1.

† Τὸ κυριώτατον τῆς εὐσεβείας. Epiet. c. 37.

these

these sort of Men before I give a direct Answer. CHAP. XVIII. They doubt the Principles of the *Atheist*, and no less doubt the Principles of the *four* sorts of *Deists* as enumerated by Dr. *Clark*.* In short, the Principles of all Religion, *Jewish*, *Mahometan*, *Pagan*, *Christian*, are equal Matter of Doubt to a thorough Sceptick. His Religion is to doubt of all Religion to the End of his Days; and so long as he continues to do so, is in as bad, or rather worse State than the *Atheist*, who rejects them all. This last acts with some Consistence, sins by Maxim and Principle, having no Restraint but the Laws of his Country, and the outward Appearance of false variable Honour, without any Disturbance from any religious Principle; and takes care to skreen himself under the softer Name of *Deist*, as long as the other Appellation is shocking and odious in Sound.

BUT the *Sceptick* neither says in his heart there is no God, nor says, there certainly is one: he neither denies, nor affirms; and so has all the Inconveniencies of denying, without any of the Benefits of affirming and using. He practices upon no religious principle, Natural, nor Reveal'd: his Principle is still to postpone his intentions of being satisfied as to the Truth, some time hereafter; a worse fallacy than deferring Repentance to a Death-bed; for then they have the principle to seek, and be satisfied whether it is a Duty or not. All the time they should be obeying a plain Law for the good of themselves and the World, they spend in forming Syllogisms about Law, and Obedience;

† *Evidences of Nat. and Reveal'd Rel.* p. 19, &c.

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and so live without Law. If they do any laudable action, it must be by Chance, or from some foreign motive, never out of Design; there being no fix'd Principle to design upon, and where that is not, there can be no Virtue; for whatsoever is not of Faith, is *Sin*. And as they live void of Consistency, and all Care of themselves, either as to the Principles, or Consequences of their actions, how can the Care of others do them any good, farther than endeavouring to convince them of a folly and absurdity, that exceeds all that is to be found among moral Agents, I mean Mankind; for they may, perhaps, doubt whether they are moral Agents, or not?

There are two extremes more or less culpable in the Conduct of the Understanding, with regard to Truth. (1). The conduct of most Mens Understanding towards Truth is so negligent and lose of Attention, that they take up with the smallest appearances, without distinguishing; they admit into their minds popular discourses and positions; and to save the trouble of examination, and be like their Neighbours, take the Truth of them for granted, and almost for sacred; they treasure up in their minds a confused heap of either obscure, often false, misunderstood, at least, unexamined particulars; upon these they reason and draw conclusions similar to the premises; little considering what they say or what they mean; they receive bad reasoning daily, and pay it away again: and because they think it a diminution to their Understanding to be ignorant of any thing, notwithstanding so many things are really hid from our knowledge; or to doubt of any thing, tho' so many others are

are wrapt up in uncertainty and ambiguity; CHAP.
hence it is you converse with so many mistaken XVIII.
minds, and almost as many positive people, who
form a rash judgment of what they know confusedly and obscurely, decide peremptorily what they don't understand, nor have examin'd into.

2. THE Sceptick in order to avoid this too great credulity which he laughs at, runs into the contrary extreme, the worst extravagance of Understanding, a more ridiculous weakness than the former, and, at the same time, a most pernicious impudence in denying the Use of any Truth in Society, however constant, useful and indubitable the Truth is; and rather than be at the pains, or bear the requisite attention for separating mistakes and dross of error, he foolishly throws the Gold and Truth away together, and so impoverishes and strips his Understanding of that which was made to adorn, and enrich it, preserve and guide it.

THO' they are so scrupulous as to carry the doubting Humour to every thing without them, yet it is Madness to doubt their own Existence, or the Truth of what they feel *within* themselves; if any thing has a Title to the feeling Sense of Reality it must be that: but if the Truth of *that* is allow'd, the Truth of what is without unavoidably follows, because what is *without* concerns, and is relative to what is *within*.

THE Disputes among Christians are to him no manner of Justification. For they are nevertheless agreed in practising upon Fundamentals: but he allows no Certainty even as to *them*; affects the disputing Humour perpetually, and comes to no Resolution; and therefore being divided between

CHAP. between two contrary Interests, is distracted, and
 XVIII. torn in Pieces by his own Doubts, and tossed in
 Mind perpetually like a Wave of the Sea, unstable in all his Ways; not having the Satisfaction of following the *Lord*, in case he is God, nor yet of following *Baal*, in case he is the God. And this *Vertigo* of Opinions, and Vanity of disputing every Thing, takes the Heart quite off from making any Application, or forming any Purpose of Practice; and thus the whole Life passes, and evaporates in Speculation, for Speculation sake, without any Thought of the true Use of it; with the greatest Dissatisfaction in Life, and, at the same Time, the least Reputation, as being void of all Sense and good Conduct, robbing himself of the true Use of his own Understanding, and of all Benefit of Truth and Knowledge; which is nothing else than, *dare operam ut cum ratione insaniat*, “to exert his Faculties in order to prove himself the most egregious Fool in the World.” There is neither Seed-time, nor Harvest in his Calendar; if it was not for the Faith of his Neighbours he would be starved. He runs down *all* Wine as universally sophisticated (tho’ he loves it well as it helps to Jest and Scorn of Religion) because, in this Country, a great deal is so. Thus the *Scorner seeketh the Wisdom* of finding out Cheats, *but never findeth it*, because he declines or rather scorns the common *distinguishing* Methods of finding; with him *all Things* are Cheats: and what is the sagacious Consequence of all this, but to live the smile of Co-temporaries, and be remember’d as a painful Tormenter, and Arch-Deceiver of himself? So wretched a Seat is the Seat of Scorners! He needs no Hell to revenge the first; and the latter bespeaks a Madhouse, or
 is

a Fool's Cap. For is not that man deservedly the ^{CHAP.} Jest of all the World, who makes a Jest of all ^{XVIII.} Truth?

It is impossible for him to answer to himself, the Hazard he runs; for, if the Truths of Christianity are but possible, he acts not wisely; if probable, very imprudently; if certain, his Conduct is most miserable, enthusiastick, and mad. And as to the Capacity of raising a Dispute, there is no Honour nor Reputation in it, unless it is the Credit of excelling others in Vain-glory, Perverseness of Spirit, and a bad Heart join'd to a good Memory, and voluble Fancy, bent upon the worst Purpose, of unsettling every Thing valuable in human Society; every Thing more or less being capable of Dispute, mathematical Demonstration excepted.

I PROCEED to consider the Objections of these *Scepticks*. The Author of *Characteristicks* lays his down in these Words, "Whoever is not conscious of Revelation, nor has certain Knowledge of any Miracle or Sign, can be no more than *Sceptick* in the Case: And the best Christian in the World, who being destitute of the Means of *Certainty*, depends only on History and Tradition for his Belief in these Particulars, is at best but a *Sceptick* Christian."*

THE Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. has these Words; "That God reveal'd his Will, any way besides the Light of Nature, can only come under the Head of Probability."†
"And as there can be no Demonstration of the

* Vol. III. p. 72.

† p. 162.

CHAP. “ Revelation itself, so neither can there be any
 VXIII. “ of its Conveyance to Posterity ; much less
 “ that this or that has been convey’d entire to
 “ distant Times and Places.”—“ Nay the very
 “ Nature of Probability is such, that were it
 “ left to Time itself, even that would wear it
 “ quite out*, at least if it be true, what *Ma-*
 “ *thematicians* pretend to demonstrate, viz:
 “ That the Probability of Facts, depending upon
 “ human Testimony, must gradually lessen in
 “ proportion to the Distance of Time when
 “ they were done.”

THE first supposes, there is no *Certainty* sufficient to assure us of the Truth of the Christian Religion, less than *Eye-sight* of Miracles and Signs. The second supposes, there is no Foundation for believing it, but only Probability ; the Nature of which, he says, is such, *that the Progress of Time will wear it quite out.* In answer to both, I shew,

1. THAT the Evidence of *our* Faith is built upon *moral* Certainty.

2. THAT that Certainty does not in the least diminish by *Progress* of Time.

THE Absurdities that overtake the first Supposition are so many, and so flagrant, that the bare mention of some of them is sufficient to expose the Futility of such an Objection. In order to make Christians, or make them certain of their Faith, it supposes, that Christ ought to live and die, rise again and work Miracles in every Age, in every Country, in every

* *ib.* 163.

City or Town in the World successively ; or, at least, that the Apostles and Messengers of that Faith must continue so to do, to evince the Certainty of it : which is to destroy the very End and Use of Miracles. A strange Demand from a *Deist* ! who all agree to make a Jest of the Testimony of Miracles, and yet insist upon them. Ridiculous Perverseness in Perfection !

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THE Sight of Miracles, particularly that great one, *Christ risen from the Dead*, is, by Implication, affirm'd in the Record of them to be *infallible Proofs* ; and they undoubtedly are so. The Conviction they bring to the Beholder is so rousing, and in a manner irresistible ; that, one would imagine, they could never fail of necessitating Assent to the Truth of the Doctrines they were brought to prove ; yet we know, some of the Beholders of many of them, rather than receive the Doctrines, absurdly imputed that very Proof to a quite different Author, the greatest Adversary to the Doctrines in the World. And if such a Proof is resistible, it follows, that Miracles *seen* work Conviction only in a *moral* Way ; and that Miracles *believ'd* and undenied as to the Matter of Fact of them, soon after they were seen, and so to the End of the World, will produce no Conviction upon those who will not embrace the Doctrines ; and that Evasions against that Testimony, tho' never so undeniable, will ever be offer'd by such, in excuse for not embracing.

THIS is notorious with respect to *Celsus*, *Julian*, *Porphyry*, bitter, potent, learned Enemies of the Christian Doctrine. They acknowledg'd the *Matter of Fact* of such being really wrought, and

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and were no Imposture, in those who testified the Faith ; yet had no effect, nor ever will have upon any resolv'd Enemy to such Doctrines, determin'd to continue bad, because they are too good and contrary to them, to be receiv'd. Therefore it need not be added, that if the Truth of those Miracles could not be objected to, *then*, when the Circumstances of Time, Persons, Places were all recent, and no Opportunity nor Ability wanting to have detected the Forgery, they must remain undeniable and invincible to all Ages after. How absurd therefore is that *Sceptical* Insinuation, “ There being at
“ present no immediate Testimony of *Miracle*
“ or *Sign* in behalf of holy Writ—That the
“ *holy Records* themselves were no other than
“ the pure Invention or artificial Compilement
“ of an *interested Party*, in behalf of the *richest*
“ *Corporation* and most profitable *Monopoly*
“ which cou'd be erected in the World.” *

NOTHING is probable itself *in rerum natura* ; because every thing really is, or really is not ; and therefore naturally certain that it is, or naturally certain that it is not. But with respect to the Recipient, or judging Faculty, whether the Thing is, or is not, or in such Circumstances, or not, the Conveyance of the Truth, and the judging Faculty being both *fallible* ; we cannot have, from the Nature of Things, an *infallible* Certainty or Demonstration : nevertheless, we have, at the same Time, plenty of *rational, moral, human* Certainty, such Evidence as the Nature of the Things is only capable of being proved by : and as it extinguishes and

* *Character*. Vol. III. 236.

cludes all Doubting, upon the just Grounds and moral Reasons of doubting, is equivalent to that Infallibility which belongs not to our Nature; or to that Demonstration, which it is incapable of receiving, in any Thing, but *Mathe-maticks*. So that there may be a most sufficient, moral, conclusive Certainty, at the same Time there is an understanding Faculty naturally fallible, and a natural Possibility that the Thing may be otherwise.

THIS is evidently the Spring of all human Action, either with respect to this World, or the next, in regard to every thing we don't see ourselves; and yet at the same Time, there is all moral Assurance, full Certainty and *imputed* Substance of the Things themselves; and so their Affections, and Relations to us, and our Morals, become certain. Consequently, Faith is a Virtue, because it is an Assent, not from Sight, but Reason, upon Argument *morally* persuasive; that it need not, ought not, cannot always be upon Sight, and yet is nevertheless as true and certain in the Eye of Reason, in every moral Agent, as if it was. And is more commendable and rewardable for being founded in Reason; *Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed*. A Conviction from the Evidence of Reason is more valuable in the Sight of God, than that from Sense; and this standing Argument, ever the same, of the ever enduring Gospel, is more worthy of its perpetual Dignity, and its universal Importance, than the sensible temporary Proofs of it. The superior Blessing of believing without seeing, throws the Argument of all future Belief out of the Testimony of Sense, into the more human Testimony

CHAP. of divine History and the Evidence of Reason
XVIII. thereupon.

AND consequently it must be a very idle Listening, and incogitant Credulity to imagine, that any after *Apparition* from the *Dead* should ever be able to make that certainer than our Lord ever intended it should be, to future Generations; or, that it can be any thing less than a Disparagement to him, and his Gospel, to be willing to call in a-fresh the Evidence of *Sense*, after that had been so irrefragably establish'd by *his own Resurrection* from the Dead; and he has determin'd, and given the Preference, in addresssing and limiting the Persuasion of his Gospel to the *reasoning*, more than to the seeing Faculties of his Christians. Was an Apparition from the Dead in every Age and Place, any Divine Argument of a future State, where there is a standing Revelation, not only of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, but of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, every Christian has a Right to expect it: But as they are forbid to expect it, there is the less Reason for any to pretend to those officious Proofs, or for others to believe the Report.

THE Virtue of believing consists in being morally, and therefore dutifully, satisfied of the Truth of Things not cognizable to our personal Senses, which concern us as moral Agents; and most moral Truths are of this Nature. *Mathematical* Demonstration shews the Subject of its Science to be true, from the *Impossibility* of its being otherwise. What Thanks, what Virtue in believing what one can't help, or hinder believing? But as the Will can, and does help or hinder believing in the other Case, Unbelief is a Sin,

Sin, and Belief a Virtue, where there is *sufficient* Evidence: And as there is more of *Will*, than Understanding in Matters of plain, practical Faith, therefore Sin and Duty, Reward and Punishment, are annex'd to the Transgression, or Obedience of Faith.

No Man can have any Inclination that *mathematical* Demonstration should not be true; being opposite to nothing that he chuses or refuses, as a moral Agent. But when the Evidence of the other sort, as cogent in its kind, as the other in its kind, happens cross to Inclination irregularly indulg'd, we know what a bad Chance it stands, of being received: Here the Will is particularly affected in the reigning Interest of its Purposes, and puts itself into an opposing or refusing Posture; but being unconcern'd in the other Truth, because no moral Good or Evil issues from it, it has nothing to object.

WHAT gives the moral Certainty, is of like Nature with that, in many Cases, which affords *mathematical* Certainty, *i. e.* if the contrary Supposition involves a moral Absurdity, or Impossibility in the general Course of human Belief, safely trusting unseen Things to be true; which is so absolutely necessary in the World, and is the Law that holds Society together, in its essential Mutuality of Trust. If it is *morally* impossible it should be otherwise, with respect to the first Testifiers of the Christian Faith, or their Conveyance of it to others, that they should be deceived themselves, or have any Design of deceiving others; supposing Mankind to act upon the common known Principles which influence their Actions, and their own Faculties to be so

CHAP. commonly true as not to deceive them; then
XVIII. the *moral* Certainty of the Truth of their Testi-
mony, and the Conveyance of it to us, is un-
exceptionable.

WHEN the *Sceptick* practises his Doubts upon the Principle of believing nothing certain, nor any Persons, nor any Record to be sufficiently credible, because there is a *natural Possibility* of Deception; he acts upon a Principle that dissolves, by suspending the Obligations to moral Duties; he does his best to bring Ruin and Confusion into Society; he undermines the Support of all Civil Government, and Administration of Justice; and overthrows all History, all Science, all Trust in the World: Which being so dreadful an Absurdity, and so great a Contradiction to the Perfections of God the Author and Governor of Society, against his suffering such an Evil and Deception in the World, it must be morally impossible that such a Principle can be right, or true; and therefore Belief upon sufficient Evidence is morally certain and authentick. But to offer to support such a Principle by Testimony of former Times, is intolerably worse; because that is acknowledging the Validity and the sufficient Evidence of *Testimony*, when it makes for them, and doubting it always, as often as it makes against them.

MR. *Hobbs* himself is forc'd to allow " the
" admitting Propositions upon *Trust* in many
" Cases, to be no less free from *Doubt* than per-
" fect and manifest Knowledge: For as there is
" nothing whereof there is not some Cause; so
" when there is Doubt, there must be some
" Cause thereof conceiv'd. Now there be many
" things

“ things which we receive from *Report of others*, CHAP.
 “ of which it is impossible to imagine any Cause XVIII.
 “ of *Doubt*: For what can be oppos’d against
 “ the Consent of all Men, in things they can
 “ know, and have no Cause to report otherwise
 “ than they are (such is the great Part of our
 “ *Histories*) unless a Man would say, that all
 “ the World had conspir’d to deceive him *.”

Now, tho’ the Testimony is never so plainly from God, and the Record thereof supported by the most unexceptionable Historical Evidence (which is all the Evidence the truest Narration is capable of, nor is there any Evidence or Truth of Things surer than that of some History) still, it is in the Power of Man, especially under the Bias of irregular Affection, or culpable Prejudice, to suspend his Assent to Truths never so well attested, and conveyed; by not suffering his Understanding to attend sufficiently, if at all, to the Credibility, or Importance of the Things spoken of; regarding neither the internal, nor external Evidence that evince their Certainty, and their Excellency. . And such is their Excellency, the less the Truth concerns us, the more fallible and various will human Judgment ever be; the more generally important those Truths are, so much the clearer the Perception, so much the more certain and unanimous the Judgment.

It is abominably shameful in the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* barely to repeat the stale Objection of *various Readings* in Diminution of the Credit of the Conveyance of those Truths, after they have been so confounded in it, and put

* *Tripes*, or *Three Discourses*, pag. 36.

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to flight by *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, and not able to rally the least Reply, after so many Years study for it. Especially, when it is confess'd on all Hands, that no one Matter of Fact, or Faith, or Practice, in any of the *material* Things that concern Salvation, are in the least affected by them; but all remain as entire as if they came fresh from the *Apostles* Hand-writing. They themselves overlook abundantly more various Readings in every *prophane* Author of like Antiquity, as no Impeachment or Objection at all.

BESIDES there is a further moral Assurance to Christians, in common, and Security enough against any Doubting, from *monumental* Practice grounded upon the first Establishment, for preserving the Memory from Father to Son, from Age to Age, in the Observation of *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper*, *Easter-day* annually, and the *Lord's-day* weekly; which hand down the Death, Resurrection, and the other great Articles of our Faith. The Resurrection of Christ, and Ascension to Heaven, is moreover an easy, short, effectual Argument to every plain Christian, of the Resurrection of our Bodies, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State, beyond any labour'd Proof. Nor,

2. DOES the moral Certainty of the Evidence of Faith diminish by *Progress of Time*. For with Respect to that *first* and primary Care, there is, besides the Providence of God, the moral Argument from the Principles Mankind always act upon, in the constant, and common Concern of transmitting to Posterity important Facts and Truths, which concern them, as much

as themselves. And if Men are so careful of transmitting to Posterity *Greek*, and *Roman* History of worldly Transactions, when, by the common Vicissitudes of earthly Dominion, the Concern of After-Ages will indeed diminish, and die away in Process of Time in proportion to the Distance; can they neglect to transmit that, with equal Care, wherein themselves were so deeply interested, and latest Posterity no less?

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THE Interest and Concern that Posterity may have in recorded Facts is one Thing, and the Truth and Certainty of those Facts quite another; the former indeed may thro' Distance of Time and Place dwindle into nothing, whilst the other remains, and will, as long as the Record lasts, for ever remain as true and certain, as at the first recording; if true then, it must always continue so. Accordingly, who doubts the Truth of the *Greek*, *Roman*, or other authentick Histories, any more now, than a thousand Years ago? Whilst our immediate Concern in any of them is worn out and come to nothing. But in the other Case, the Truth and the Concern are the same, and will remain so to the End of the World; I mean, that Men ought ever to shew the same Concern for Truths they may be morally certain of, and are as much interested in, as those that first committed them to Writing.

IF the Certainty of those Things whereof they affirm loses any thing of its Force and Conviction, by Succession of Time, it must proceed from the Diminution of the Reasons, and Declension of the attesting Circumstances, which made the first Witnesses and Testifiers credible.

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But if none of these has lessen'd or varied, nor can lessen or vary to the latest Ages; then the Truth will be as well testified to the latest Posterity (considering the Assistance of Printing) as it was at first, *one Day* in that Case *certifieth another*: *As it was in the Beginning, is Now, and ever shall be.* If they were *Eye-Witnesses* of the Facts at first, they will continue the very same, before the Eyes of all the reading, and to the Ears of all the hearing World, to the Consummation of all Things. If they were not only capable, but *honest, faithful, consistent* Witnesses; not only honest, and consistent among themselves, but *confirm'd from Heaven* by the Power of working Miracles; not only confirm'd from thence, but, like Lambs among Wolves, *endur'd all Affliction* and *laid down their Lives* for the Testimony: If their Testimony was not only not contradicted, but *co-attested* by co-temporary, *foreign* History of other Nations: And if all these were the ratifying Reasons, and ascertaining Circumstances of the Truth at first, they will continue in the same Force of Persuasion and Conviction for ever; nor will they ever be spent, or exhausted: Because they remain *recorded* and represented in the same unvaried State, for ever.

NOT to mention from Progress of Time the increasing *Addition* of Attestations, from the gradual fulfilling of Prophecies, which remotest Posterity will have the Advantage of; and consequently that *Progress* of Time, instead of invalidating, will accumulate Strength to the Evidences of Christianity, and banish Infidelity from off the Earth, by the all convincing Lustre of its Truth, in the Experience of so many Ages.

The

The farther the Stream of Prophetick and Even-CHAP. tual Truth runs from its Spring Head, the first XVIII.
Promise of God to Man, the larger it grows,
 it bears down all Denial, and drowns Scepticism,
 (laying hold of every Twig to save itself) very
 deep.

THAT *mathematical* Book therefore of a *Reverend* Author alluded to in the Margin, though I have not the Opportunity of seeing it, if it should happen to be calculated to make out the Truth of that Text, *Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on Earth ?* If that End is mistaken, the whole Process must be a Mistake; or at least an egregious Impertinence, as being founded upon a wrong *Hypothesis*, (though I rather presume that *such* an Author could not be in earnest.) Nor can *Mathematicks* have any thing to do in the Affair, any farther than common *Arithmetick* counting up the afore-said attesting Circumstances, and the gradual Diminution of their Credibility, in Time; the contrary of which I have made appear. For the Faith there spoken of cannot be understood, and ought not to be extended to any *other sort* of Faith, than what our Lord was then discoursing about, or its similar Case; and that is plainly the *Son of Man avenging the Elect speedily* by the Destruction of the *Jews*: Yet they began to think the Delay so long, that many cried out, *Where is the Promise of his coming?* Many forsook the assembling themselves together, and reverted to *Judaism*; and there were but few left, who believed the *Speediness* of that Vengeance or Coming of the Son of Man, till they were surpriz'd

* Luke xviii. 8.

CHAP. with the Suddenness of it. So likewise at the
 XVIII. Day of Judgment, there will be but little
 Faith as to the Suddenness and Unexpectedness,
 though premonish'd of it; Men will be equally
 surpriz'd, all too careless, and too many un-
 provided.

I CONCLUDE therefore with Respect to the
Scepticks, that they are not only inexcusable
 to themselves, but *Criminals* against God, and
 Society; by considering such important Truths
 and such sufficient Evidences of them carelessly
 and negligently; *suspending* all proper Resolution,
 and affecting always to *doubt* the Truth. Tho' if
 they allow any one thing to be *certain*, suppose
 their own Existence, if they have not the As-
 surance to doubt of that, that is sufficient to
 confute and confound the Absurdity of their
 Humour. The Certainty of their own Existence
 unavoidably proves the certain Existence, the
 Nature, and Attributes of God; whence follows
 the Truth of Religion, the Refutation of what
 is false, the fixing and ascertaining, and the
 clearing up of all Doubtfulness, in what is most
 valuable and concerning. But it is certain they
 are secret, tho' undeclar'd Enemies of the Faith,
 not openly throwing off Friendship to it, whilst
 they retain Hatred at the Heart, and conse-
 quently in their Actions and Conduct are worse
 than the *Deist*, who is an open avow'd Adversary.
 And therefore it is inconsistent in the latter, af-
 ter they have openly declar'd themselves Enemies
 and Rejecters of Faith, to put on the *Sceptick* in
 their Argument; for that is rejecting absolutely
 and retaining it, at the same time, at least in
 the appearance of Suspence.

IV. THERE are NEGLECTERS of this Faith, among the outward Professors of it. As the three former are guilty of Immorality thro' a vicious Will, rejecting, or corrupting, or suspending Assent to the Faith, so these are guilty, by suspending Practice suitable to it. These are the most numerous, and too many of them the Seminary of the other; having a Tendency and Disposition to grow up in time into some of the former. When an Age is very much degenerat-ed in Practice contrary to its Principles, it is naturally inclin'd and prepar'd to receive Principles that are more favourable to such Practices, and People so dispos'd can hardly miss of them, as they so openly proffer themselves every where; and as they spread and are imbib'd, the Overflowing of Ungodliness rises so much the higher in its Stream, and will bear no Controul.

ALL the holy Truths and Duties of Christianity, deriving from their Fountain-Head, Faith in the *Mediator*, operate always, in all Persons, in proportion as they are heartily assented to, understood, consider'd, and used as the Religion of the Means for carrying on the Religion of the End, *i. e.* the fulfilling all obligations to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves; those true practical Ends, for the sake of which, the other become our Profession and Denomination. The degree of Piety and Good-works may answer up to, and be in the Proportion of *Thirty, Sixty, or an Hundredfold*; but can't exceed: Therefore there must be the like degrees and proportion in Faith causing those Productions, by a more or less Consideration, or hearty Application of those ever necessary Motives and Springs

CHAP. Springs of Christian obedience, where-ever that
XVIII. Faith is sufficiently promulg'd.

A DUBIOUS Life made up of Ebbs and Flows of Virtue and Vice may very well become a dubious Faith of a future State, as was the Case of the Heathen Philosophers. But, without all doubt, it ought to be otherwise settled with Christians.

THE *primitive* Christians consider'd them, understood them, and apply'd them vigorously as the most divine Means, true in Proof, potent in Effect to that End; which made their Lives and their Faith so gloriously shine before Men, zealous of good Works; suffering any thing for its sake, and so adorning the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; neither being ashamed of Christ, nor a Shame to him, in any thing*; then did his Religion personally shine forth in a convincing, divine, irresistible Evidence. Their Baptism, as it ought, did indeed represent to them their Profession, which is *to follow Christ and be made like unto him, dying unto Sin and rising to Righteousness, and daily proceeding in all Godliness and Virtue*; and the Lord's Supper, or breaking of Bread frequently, refresh'd them, comforted them, and help'd to make them *servent in Spirit serving the Lord*. Faith in the mediatorial Kingdom had a despotick Rule over those hearty Subjects, for Improvement and Perfection in Godliness, and Goodness; it had a *Lordly*

* Dicimus et palam dicimus, et vobis torquentibus lacerati vociferamur, *Deum colimus per Christum*, Tertul. Apol. c. 21. *Hæc omnia faciunt, non propter ardorem inanis Gloriae, sed propter caritatem Felicitatis eternæ.* Augustin.

Dominion over the Disciple, when he took the Name Christian, he submitted as to his Sovereign Lord, the After-conduct of his Will, Words, and Deeds, they were all cheerfully and absolutely controul'd by its Laws: They never lost Sight of their solemn Engagements; they daily remembred them as the Capital Maxim of their Conduct: whilst now-a-days every seditious Tribune of Self-sufficiency, or inordinate Affection, disputes the Authority; or is very indifferent to the Government; makes *Sacramental* Resolutions in order to remember them no more, or be nothing the better for them. The Degrees of Faith, in the ordinary Course of Providence, will ever arise out of the greater, or less Degree of Mens assenting to, and putting them also in use as such, to such Purpose.

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THE modern Reason why the Lives of so many Christians are unlike their holy Profession is, because they don't examine the Grounds and the Nature of their Faith, to know the Certainty and the Purport of it, for giving it an effectual Force upon their Minds, in referring its indubitable Design to holy and righteous Practice; they have but an half-persuasion of the Certainty of it, tho' attested with a full Evidence; they afford an indolent Assent in general that such things *may be*, rather, than that they assuredly are, and that our Salvation and Happiness depend upon the right Reception and Application of them; a Method of not disbelieving, rather than believing in any Earnest, or to any Purpose. How very many in these Kingdoms have been educated in the Christian Religion, yet how very few have embraced it

as

CHAP. as the Effect of a deliberate Choice? They be-
 XVIII stow their simple Approbation as on a Fashion
 or Custom of their Country, and had they been
 born and brought up in any other, of another
 Persuasion, they would have done the very
 same; and therefore if the Fashion of the
 Faith should vary, or threaten a Variation by
 the Desertion of Numbers, they are ready to
 come into it: because, as a personal, obliga-
 tory, covenanted, saving Thing they regard it
 not at all. This is that frequent, fruitless, *feign-*
ed Faith, the reverse of that *unfeigned Faith*
 which is appointed to head a *pure Conscience*.
 And what pity it is, what Reproach and Scan-
 dal to the Reason of many Christians, that their
 continual Inconsideration, Negligence, and Care-
 lessness in those Things which they profess they
 do believe, and which they acknowledge they
 can do, should so constantly, and with so much
 Aggravation, undo so many of them!

THEY either consider them not as what they
 are, Means, but as what they are not; and so
 rest in them, as the End, *κατέργον έργον*; as able
 to acquit them of the moral Law, or dispense
 with some Disobedience, or raise Hope of Justi-
 fication, or, thro' some other false defeating
 Opinions mixing with it, defeat its Intention.
 Or, if they take them to be Means, they never-
 theless employ them not at all, or negligently,
 and unconstantly; and so either way shame their
 Profession, and so relinquish the serene Benefits,
 Comforts, and Heavenly Benedictions of their
 Faith, for the horrible Accusation, and Con-
 demnation thereof.

THAT

THAT Animadversion may possibly be too just, with respect to some few, “ who went
 “ from Church to Chapel, from Chapel to
 “ Church, and were punctual in all Church Ce-
 “ remonies, without regarding the End for
 “ which they could be instituted : So, that in-
 “ stead of being humble, affable, and good,
 “ they have proved big with the worst sort of
 “ Pride, Spiritual Pride ; censuring and de-
 “ spising their Neighbours, though ever so
 “ good, if they were not as punctual as them-
 “ selves in observing those Things ; and the
 “ Conceit they had of their own Godliness,
 “ has made them as troublesome at Home as
 “ Abroad, as bad Wives as Neighbours.*” It
 is commendable to learn even from an Enemy.
 But these Considerations do not fall under my
 present Design.

I CONCLUDE therefore, that this Faith in
 the *Mediator*, as before represented, purposely
 reveal’d for influencing the Christian Life, and
 invigorating the degenerated Powers of Man to
 good Works, is so necessary, so morally ne-
 cessary to both, (where it is made known) that
 they depend upon it as their *moral* Cause ; and
 consequently, that a Rejection, or Corruption,
 or habitual Doubting, or Neglect in the former,
 is that inward Principle of Immorality, which
 produces the same in the latter. Such as the
 Tree is, such will be the Fruit. Where there
 is Unbelief, there will be Impenitency, Apostasy
 from Prayer, and a Subsidence into all evil

* *Christianity as old, &c.* pag. 132.

CHAP. Works either of Flesh, or Spirit, or both. But
XVIII. when there is Faith towards our *Lord Jesus*
Christ in serious Earnest, and to its true Purpose,
there will be true Repentance towards God,
with true Devotion, and every good Work:
And the Increase and Steadiness of every Christian's
Virtue will be in proportion, to their
Increase and Steadiness in that Faith in the
Mediator.



CHAP.



C H A P. XIX.

A Proper Answer to the DEIST, objecting the Want of Universality to the Christian Religion.

L RESERVE this to the last, and CHAP. thought once of throwing it into an XIX. Appendix, as being an Objection rather to the Ways of Divine Providence, than to the intrinsic Merits of Christianity. But as these Objectors are very impertinent, in laying so great a Stress upon it, and immodestly importunate in so often repeating it, since the first starting by *Porphyry*, who was himself an *Epicurean* * as to his Philosophy,

* For *Epicurean* read *Platonist*. This indeed maims that part of the preliminary Observation; but as it is Truth, upon farther Inquiry, it must in Conscience be submitted to. And I take this Opportunity to thank the ingenuous Gentleman [See *Fog's Journal* 13 Nov. 1736. being a Letter from a *Deist* converted upon reading this Book] for his Correction of the Mistake, and to beg the Correction of all other Mistakes from every other learned Hand, in a Cause of such Dignity and Importance; promising, they shall be publicly acknowledged, in Case they prove Mistakes, to the generous Corrector, who does me that Honour and Favour. I am the more obliged to the Candor of the learned Letter Writer, for making his Judgment of my imperfect Performance, from the main *Drift* and *Design* of it, and at the same time generously overlooking not a few Inaccuracies and lesser Faults, that escaped in the first Edition by one Means or

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phy, and consequently unconcern'd as to *Providence*; the Objection therefore from the Beginning is plainly a *wrested* Occasion for aspersing Christianity; because all the Lines being strait and simply drawn from that true Center of Divinity, *God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, make the most comprehensive establish'd Circumference of Reason and Probity, true Religion and Divine Worship, godly, sober, and righteous Living. I shall return them a PROPER Answer, by and by, after I have first begg'd leave of the Reader to premise some general Considerations upon this Subject. The Objection in its full Strength, is as follows.

“ If we suppose any *arbitrary* Commands in
 “ the Gospel, we place Christians in a worse
 “ Condition than those under no Law but that
 “ of Nature, which requires nothing but what
 “ is moral; and consequently the greatest Part
 “ of Mankind, who are to be judg'd by the
 “ Law they know, and not by the Law they do

other, forming his Taste like a Gentleman and Scholar, by the Rule of the *best* Critick,

Verum ubi plura nitent—————

————— *Non ego paucis*

*Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
 Aut Humana parum cavet Natura.*

HOR.

The Publick is the more engaged to his ingenuous Acknowledgments, because he seems to place all the real Charms and Beauty of good Writing in *Divinity*, in the Display of *Truth*, in a *plain Dress*; the enduring Solidity of it in the Appearance of the *Nature of Things* in concert with *Revelation*, without any Art, or Pious Fraud; and the Use of it in the *Importance* of the Subject: And, that being what is, or can be, the *only true Religion*, is the very greatest Concern. in this World.

“ not

“ not know, are, on this Supposition, in a bet-
 “ ter Condition as to the next World than
 “ Christians ; because they do not *bazard* the
 “ Favour of God by any Mistakes, or Omissions
 “ in such matters. To suppose some Men, who
 “ tho’ they exactly obey the Law of Nature,
 “ may yet be punish’d, even eternally, for not
 “ obeying another Law besides ; would be to
 “ make God deal infinitely less mercifully with
 “ them, than with those who have no other
 “ Law : And yet in this miserable Case are all
 “ Christians involv’d, if the Gospel requires such
 “ Things as the Law of Nature does not ; and
 “ that too under the severest Penalties——They
 “ who think Original and *Traditional* Religion
 “ don’t differ, are *free* (no small Happiness)
 “ from all *panick* Fears ; while they, who be-
 “ lieve there are things merely positive in Reli-
 “ gion, of which Reason affords no Light how
 “ they are to be perform’d, or even what they
 “ are, must *lie* under endless *Doubts* and *Fears*.” *
 “ ——Must it not be suppos’d, that either God,
 “ in creating Mankind, did not design their fu-
 “ ture Happiness ; or else that tho’ he design’d
 “ it, he prescrib’d them such Means, or gave
 “ them such Rules, as either were not sufficient
 “ at *first*, or in Process of Time became in-
 “ sufficient for that End ? but that after Men
 “ had been for many Ages in this miserable
 “ Condition, God thought fit to mend the eter-
 “ nal universal Law of Nature, by adding cer-
 “ tain Observances to it, *not founded in the Rea-*
 “ *son of Things* ; and that those, out of his par-
 “ tial Goodness, he communicated only to some,
 “ leaving the greatest Part in their former dark

* *Christian. as old*, p. 109, 110.

“ and deplorable State.—How is it consistent
 “ with the Notion of God’s being universally
 “ benevolent, not to have reveal’d it to all his
 “ Children, when all had equal need of it? Was
 “ it not as easy for him to have communicated
 “ it to *all* Nations, as to any one Nation, or
 “ Person? *——“ God requir’d Impossibilities
 “ from them, *viz.* either to preserve themselves
 “ from thus falling, or if fallen to recover
 “ themselves. But if they had not Power to
 “ do this, and it was not their Fault, that they
 “ at first were in, and after remain’d in a State
 “ of universal Degeneracy and Corruption, this
 “ must then be the State God design’d they
 “ should be in: And it would seem not only to
 “ be in vain, but a *Crime* in them to endeavour
 “ to change that State in which God, of his in-
 “ finite Wisdom and Goodness, thought fit to
 “ place them.” † “ If God always acts for
 “ the Good of his Creatures, what Reason can
 “ be assign’d, why he should not, from the *Be-*
 “ *ginning*, have discover’d such things as make
 “ for their Good; but defer the doing of it till
 “ the Time of *Tiberius*? Since the sooner this
 “ was done, the greater would his Goodness ap-
 “ pear to be.—If God acts upon rational Mo-
 “ tives, must not the same Motives which
 “ oblig’d him to discover any thing for the
 “ Good of Mankind, have oblig’d him to dis-
 “ cover *every thing* that is so——and not grudg-
 “ ingly *here a Bit and there a Bit*——and at
 “ last, tho’ he discover’d some things more
 “ plainly, yet it was to a small Part of Man-
 “ kind, the Bulk of them to this Day remaining
 “ in deplorable Ignorance.” || “ Would not

* Page 173.

† Page 340.

|| Page 365.

“ the Necessities of Mankind and the Goodness
 “ of God oblige him to have *prescribed an im-*
 “ *mediate Remedy* to the Disease, and not de-
 “ ferr’d it for four thousand Years together? ” *
 “ Is not this Notion repugnant to the natural
 “ Idea we have of the Divine Goodness? As
 “ likewise those express Texts of Scripture,
 “ which declare *God is no Respector of Persons* ;
 “ that *every one, of what Nation soever, shall be*
 “ *rewarded according to his Works*, and that *Men*
 “ *are accepted according to what they have, and*
 “ *not according to what they have not.* ” † If God
 “ never intended Mankind should at any time be
 “ *without Religion*, or have false Religions, and
 “ there be but *one true Religion*, which *all* have
 “ been ever bound to believe and profess, the
 “ Means to effect this End of infinite Wisdom,
 “ must be as universal and extensive as the End
 “ itself.” ‡

THIS is the Objection in its full Length, and with its utmost Force : It supposes several things in Contradiction to Truth, and Matter of Fact. As

1. IT supposes arbitrary Commands in the Christian Religion, which I have confuted at large before ; and that the Receivers of its *peculiar* Institutions run greater *bazard* of the Favour of God, than the Rejecters of them ; that these last are free from *panick* Fear, whilst the other lie under endless Doubts and Fears.

2. THAT God did not prescribe sufficient Means for Mens Happiness at first, from the

* Page 363.

† Page 371.

‡ Page 4.

Beginning, or an immediate Remedy to the Disease ; but deferr'd it for 4000 Years till the Time of *Tiberius*, and then communicated it only to a *small Part* of Mankind ; and that it would be a *Crime* in those, to whom the Means and Remedy of Happiness was not explicitly reveal'd, to endeavour to help themselves in their dark and deplorable State: It supposes further, that the Means and Remedy is *not founded in the Reason of Things* ; the contrary of which last Position I have made appear throughout the preceding Treatise.

3. THAT this partial Proceeding of Providence is contrary to the Notion and Idea we have of the Divine Goodness ; and to that Character, *of being no Respector of Persons*. And that, as there is but *one true Religion*, the Means ought to be as general as the End, and as explicitly known to one Nation as to another.

BEFORE I reply particularly, I would observe in general. 1. Supposing this World made (no uncommon Opinion) to supply the Place of *fallen Angels*, one World arising out of the Ruins of another ; God may chuse so many Elect out of our World (and when a Person is *elected* it seems to be to some *Vacancy*) in what part he pleases. Supposing further, what seems highly probable, that those Angels were graduated and differenc'd by different Endowments, some having *one* Talent, more *two*, but most of them *five* committed to them ; the Scripture actually distinguishes them into *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Rulers of the Darknes of this World*, and *spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, all fighting in their Courses, and contending against Men, especially

cially *Christians*; then the fewest were to be elected out of the *Heathen World*, some out of the *Jews*, but most out of the *Christians*, who have receiv'd the *five Talents* here below. God the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, with the *holy Angels*, all interest themselves, and offer Qualifications to the *Christian*, if they will but *consent*, and use proper Endeavours to be elected. All that are called might be *chosen*; and it is thro' their own Defect that *many are called, and few chosen*. The wicked Angels oppose it with all their Devices, and Might: And all the Might and Chance they have in the Opposition is owing to the Folly, Inconstancy, and Abuse of Liberty in the *Candidate*. And what sharpens the Vigilance and Keeness of the Opposition is, out of regard to their own Interest; that they might thereby prevent the Numbers of the *Elect* from being compleated, as long as they can, and so defer the evil Day, the *Day of Judgment*,* as late as possible; and towards alleviating the Miseries of that Day, in the mean time, gather up all the *Associates* they can, in the Calamity prepar'd for them.

2. IT is not true in Fact, that God did not prescribe sufficient Remedy to the Disease, or afford sufficient Means for Mens Happiness, but deferr'd it for 4000 Years till the Time of *Tiberius*. As the Will of God was directed by the greatest Wisdom and Goodness in appointing different Degrees of Happiness or Rewards hereafter, according to the different Use Men make of their moral Powers in pursuing it in this Life, in the diligent and due Application of the Means he severally put in their Power; so, from the first Prevarication in Happiness, or be-

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beginning of the Disease, he prescrib'd one uniform, potent, adequate Remedy, to supply every thing that was not in Man's Power, upon Condition of his diligently doing every thing on his part that was in his Power, from the first to the last Man of our Race ; and successively thro' all his Generations, and in every Country under Heaven ; which was the *Promise* of the *Mediator* in Paradise, in the *Seed of the Woman*, as I observ'd before. And this *Means* was dispens'd to Mankind by the same Wisdom and Goodness in the Diversity of *one, two, and five* usufructuary Talents ; as it was more obscurely, or less clearly, or, at length, reveal'd to perfect Light ; whilst every Man had *equally* committed to him the *one using* Talent, of *diligently seeking God as he is*, and *diligently seeking to please him as a Rewarder*, committed to him.

WITH respect to those who had the *one* Talent of *Means*, I took notice before * how that universal Principle of Reason, and Creed of Natural Religion, *That God is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, flow'd from that original *Promise* of a *Mediator* to *Adam*. There needed but one Person, *Methuselah*, to convey it safe to *Noah*, for he convers'd with both of them. *Enoch*, and doubtless others in the old World walk'd with God and pleas'd him in virtue of that Faith ; and *Sacrifice* was unquestionably intimated and *instituted* from Heaven, from the very first, as observ'd before, to conserve that *Hope* and *Belief*, and preserve the Memorial of that *Means* of *pleasing God* without which Faith, of God being a *Rewarder*, in vir-

tue of that Means, or Medium, it was *impossible* either in the old World, or the new, implicitly or explicitly, *to please him*. From Noah, who is called the *Heir of the Righteousness of Faith* of the old World, the *Promise* with the *Sacrifice* flow'd down in two Channels, one, in a direct Line to *Abraham*, and so to the House and Lineage of *David*; to *Abraham* the *Promise* was renew'd of blessing *all Nations* and Kindreds of the World in *his Seed*, that should be born of the *Virgin Mary*. In the other, *Promise* and *Sacrifice* went out in a winding Channel, to water the rest of the Earth more sparingly, and with Interruptions from the Inhabiters of it, till the Time of refreshing should come from the Presence of the Revelation of the *Lord*.

THO' the *Promise* might be lost in a short Time, by the Unfaithfulness of *Oral Tradition*; yet the shedding of Blood in *Sacrifice*, and the Necessity of Atonement remain'd all the World over; and we find it in Fact, in the Discovery of every distant Territory of it, together with the Memory of the *Flood* convey'd down to all People; whose Reason could hardly fail of connecting the *Sins* of the *then* World and the *Anger* and *Hatred* of God, to *such-a* Judgment, and likewise his monumental, distinguishing, *rewarding* Love of the *Righteous*, seeing almost all Mankind were drown'd, and but very few saved from perishing by Water. Yet the Religion and Devotion of *Sacrifice* carried with it, in the very Face of the Thing, a Proof and a Testimonial to every one's Reason, that God was *reconcilable* to Sinners; and therefore a *Rewarder* of
those

CHAP. those who diligently seek to please him, and conse-
 XIX. quently a Punisher of those who do not.*

THIS being so natural, so easy, and so universal a Principle of Reasoning to all Mankind, carrying with it a Divine Authority as a Principle of Faith and Religion, to all those who would do their Duty in using their Reason, in seeking God as he is, and please him in Hope of his *rewarding* Favour. And those *Gentiles* who govern their Actions by that Principle of Faith, are not so much as one Remove from *Abraham*. Having Faith in a future Country and better City, they have the Similitude of Children in that wherein *Abraham* was *Father* of the Faithful, and compleatly and emphatically Father of many Nations, they inherit that Country and City with him; and share the Blessing of *Moses's* Faith, who likewise had *Respect unto the Recompence of Reward*; all the Just upon Earth lived by *that* Faith, steer'd by that Compass, and became faithful and justifiable before God from their *Fidelity*, to that Expectation. *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preach'd the Gospel* [the Promise, the same Gospel, the same Promise to fallen *Adam*, which preserv'd the first form'd Father of the World, and brought him out of his Fall, *Wisd. x. 1.*] unto *Abraham*, *In thee shall all Nations be blessed, Gal. iii. 8.* Tho' they lost the Promise, yet it was included in that true religious Principle of God's being a *Rewarder*; and tho' Men want to be put in mind of their Promise,

* *Sacrificant, adolent, libant, orantq; vorventq;
 Mortales superis, si quid peccavit inique
 Quisquam, ut placati pœnas iramque remittant.*

yet God does not, to give the Effect of it im-
partially to all his diligent, sincere Servants.
Inasmuch as the *Mediator* tasted Death for all
Men, and gave his Life a Ransom for all, to be
testified in due time. And this makes good the
Apostle's Argument, why God would have all
Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of
the Truth, upon the Proof that follows, For there
is one God (of the Gentiles as well as the Jews,
the common Father of all Men) and one Mediator
betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*;
the Mediator, as Man, took human Nature in
general upon him, which shews the great Beauty
of his own Expression, *Whoever shall do the*
Will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is
my Brother, and Sister, and Mother; the Gentiles
being related to him as well as the Jews, and
equally ordain'd to trust in his Name; that all
the Descendants of *Adam* might be equally his
Brethren in the Flesh and Blood he partook of.
He would have all Men, by their common Rea-
soning upon his Goodness, at all Times, and in
all Places, to come to the Knowledge of that
Truth, that he is a *Rewarder* of those who dili-
gently seek to please him: That includes and
secures the rest; till in his own due Time he shall
testify the *Mediator* more openly and explicitly
to all Nations.

AND therefore the same *Apostle* tells the
Romans, that *Word*, or *Righteousness of Faith*,
which he preached, was in their Heart†, as well
as the *Righteousness of Works*, of the moral
Law, which he contended also for, and proved
to be written there.

* 1 Tim. ii. 4, &c. † Rom. x. 8.

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CHRIST is said by his Spirit *to have preached to the Disobedient in the Days of Noah*, who had imprison'd and inclos'd themselves in Wickedness, from all Reach and Effect of Preaching; and concerning *him the Prophets searched and enquired diligently, what things the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify*. And the Strivings of the Spirit in all Men is the Striving of the Spirit of Christ unreveal'd to them, but yet subsisting in virtue of the *Promise*. *Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God*, the same Apostle, *Heb. vi. 1, 2.* supposes to be the *Foundation* of all Religion; which is *unfolded* in the Summary he gives in to the Elders of *Ephesus*, of his Preaching the Religion of Christ, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts xx. 20.* *Repentance towards God*—because, that respects the Religion of the End, which was grossly and universally deviated from, and wanted to be amended; then follows the only true Means and Direction for accomplishing that noble End to the best of human Power, divinely comforted and supported—*Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.*

FOR, that God is no *Respecter of Persons*, or, in other Words, a Rewarder of his true conscientious Worshipers, is the Expectation and Voice of Nature, and wrote as it were upon the Heart of every Man, who duly exerts his Reason and does his best to serve and please him; and shall meet Encouragement and receive the Benefits of the *Mediator*, tho' unknown to them; is it not well known to us that he is an *Advocate* not only for OUR Sins, but for the Sins of the WHOLE World?

HAS

HAS not God given the Light of Reason, and in a manner enlighten'd every Man that cometh into the World, religiously using that Faculty, with *Faith in himself, that he is, and is a Rewarder, &c.* ?

SENECA *Ep.* 95. comes very nigh this, if we might interpret *Bonitas* of *Rewarding Goodness*, *Primus est Deorum cultus, Deos credere, deinde reddere illis Majestatem suam, reddere Bonitatem, sine qua nulla est Majestas.* “A Man enlighten'd with Philosophy, says *Socrates*, ought to die with Courage and a firm Hope, that in the other World he shall enjoy a Felicity beyond any thing in this.” “The Soul repairs to a Being like itself, a Being that is Divine, Immortal, and full of Wisdom, in which it enjoys an unexpressible Felicity, as being forced from its Errors, its Ignorance, its Fears, its Amours that tyranniz'd over it, and all other Evils retaining to human Nature. That Souls purg'd with Philosophy are receiv'd into yet more admirable and delicious Mansions, which I cannot easily describe; and concludes, What I told you, is sufficient to shew, that we ought to labour all our life time to purchase Virtue and Wisdom, *since we have so great a Hope and so great a Reward.*” * And with respect to *Promise*, there is a very remarkable Passage in the same Dialogue; “If both Ways [of learning Truth from others, or finding it ourselves,] fail us, amidst all human Reasons, we must pitch upon the strongest

* *Plato's Phædon*, or Immortality of the Soul. Of the Pagan Notion of Rewards and Punishments, *Vid. Alnet. Quæst. Lib. II. c. 24.*

“ and

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“ and most forcible, and trust to that as to a
 “ Ship, while we pass thro’ this stormy Sea, and
 “ endeavour to avoid its Tempests and Shelves;
 “ till we find out one more sure and firm, *such*
 “ as a *Promise or Revelation*, upon which we may
 “ happily accomplish the Voyage of this Life,
 “ as in a Vessel that fears no Danger.”

THERE is the *Truth* of the Godhead to be learnt from his Works; there is the Relation they stand in, and the *Obligation* of Duty to be gather’d and bosom’d up from the Respects and Circumstances, expectant of a future Account, they are placed in to God, their Neighbour, and themselves; there is the long-suffering continual Goodness of Divine Providence in the Distribution of fruitful Seasons, filling their Heart with Food and Gladness,—— a Gladness, from which they might plainly reason out an encouraging Prospect of securing his Favour for the better Things of a Life hereafter, in some after Provision for the better and more durable Part of Man.

WHAT tho’ the Reason of the Men of their Country and Nations round about was disused, or abused by hereditary national Idolatry; Superstition, and gross Immoralities, still there was *personal* Consideration and *Fidelity* of Reason left (and *he that is faithful in a little, is faithful also in much*) to have made it equal to *M. Antonius, Socrates, and Epictetus*, one in the highest, the other in the middle Station of Life,* the third a poor Slave. Tho’ they knew not the particular Way and Method of reconciling the

* Being once in the *Senate of Athens*, according to *Xenophon*.

pardoning

pardoning Mercy with the punishing Justice of God, they might be so sure in general from the Goodness of God, that there was some *Medium* for that ; so as to keep any Innovator from the first beginning, and thro' all Series of Time, from the Presumption of *inventing*, *appointing* and *multiplying* Mediators, the irrational Source of all Superstition and Idolatry.

IF God is a *Rewarder*, (the greater always including the less,) that implies and infers, that he is a *Pardoner*, that he is disposed to be an *Encourager*, that there is an *Assister* ; that there is most likely a gratuitous *Intercessor* and well appointed *Mediator* ; and, according to the Expectation and Philosophick Prayer of *Socrates*, that he will in due time become an *Instructor*. Now this may lead to *Repentance towards God*, because it is, in effect, *Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*, with a becoming Submission, and in a rational Kind of *Expectation* ; which is in part acknowledging Christ, and so far *Justin Martyr* acknowledges *Socrates a Christian*. And there is intimation of many such, of whom it is said, *they have seen no Prophets, yet they shall call their Sins to remembrance, and acknowledge them*, 2 *Esd.* i. 36.

BUT the modern Deist insolently and most ungratefully spurns at the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing what it is, and what are its peculiar Contents ; he repents him of that Faith, which effectually prepares and paves the Way to Repentance towards God for their guilty Mischief in the Religion of Nature ; and therefore *his* Repentance is to be repented of, or else he must never pretend to any *Acceptance*, to any Repentance,

CHAP. Repentance, or to any Prayer, of his own head-
 XIX. strong devising, or his own wilful Method, and
 Manner unsubmitive.

THEY might clearly argue, that the *invisible Godhead*, an all-present, and all-seeing *Spirit*, could never be like the Representations that the Devices of Men, foolish in Wisdom, and vain in their Imaginations, could impart to Silver or Gold, or other Materials ; that it must be very absurd and preposterous to confine and confound such a Being with such Stuff, or the Cogitations of him with such Nonsense, which served only to vilify him with Contradictions instead of glorifying him as God. Bind the Sacrifice with Cords, but let it be offer'd only to the God of Heaven, without mixing any Idolatrous Manner, or *Idol-Mediator* with it, as *Job*, that ancient *Arabian*, was free from ; and as their History relates, was practis'd in *China* for many Ages, before Idolatry enter'd. And it is probable from *Plutarch*, * That upper *Egypt* was for a long time free from the vile Idolatry they were afterwards so infamous for ; they professed to worship nothing but their God *Cneph*, whom they affirmed to be without Beginning and without End ; and tho' they represented this Deity by a Figure of a Serpent with the Head of a Hawk, in the middle of a Circle, yet they affirm'd this God was the Creator of all Things, incorruptible and eternal.

“ So far, says Sir *Isaac Newton*, as we can
 “ know by Natural Philosophy what is the
 “ first Cause, what Power he has over us, and

* De *Isid.* & *Osir.* p. 359

“ what Benefits we receive from him, so far our
 “ Duty towards him, as well as that towards one
 “ another, will appear to us by the Light of
 “ Nature. And no doubt, if the Worship of
 “ false Gods had not blinded the Heathens,
 “ their moral Philosophy would have gone far-
 “ ther than to the four Cardinal Virtues ; and
 “ instead of teaching the Transmigration of
 “ Souls, and to worship the Sun and Moon,
 “ and dead Heroes, they would have taught us
 “ to worship our true Author and Benefactor, as
 “ their Ancestors did under the Government of
 “ *Noah* and his Sons before they corrupted
 “ themselves.” * But after the Corruption en-
 ter’d, then began the Blindness and Insufficiency
 of Reason in their best Philosophers ; they were
 carried away with the Stream, and by a volunta-
 ry kind of Overbearance sided with it. Tho’
 they might know it was an Absurdity and In-
 justice to God the Creator, to worship the Crea-
 ture *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, more than the Creator (as
 the Vulgar did and will do every where) or *be-*
sides, or in *Conjunction* with him, as the Philoso-
 phers, with the *Papish* Writers might think of
 screening themselves, with the vain Distinction
 of *Relative* Worship, wherein neither *Gentile*,
Jew, nor *false* Christian, ever could, or ever can
 find the Benefit of an Excuse ; seeing relative
Swearing (a kind of Worship) by the Temple,
 &c. is condemn’d as indefensible.

It is very remarkable that the very learned
Huetius †, among others, cites the *Chinese* ; and
 shews that the *old Romans* for the first 170 Years,

* *Opticks*, p. 382.

† *Alnet. Quæst. Lib. III. c. 6. de*

cultu Idolorum.

CHAP. XIX. were without Images in their Worship, in order to prove it the universal Practice of the first Ages after the Flood to worship God without them. Which brings an Argument home to their own Door, that he did not think of, *viz.* That in Case the Scripture had not condemn'd the idolatrous Manner of worshipping by Images, the uncorrupt State of Nature supplies an Argument against it.

THE Children of God therefore over the Face of the Earth having receiv'd their Original Portion, and *common Grace* to have secur'd his Favour; if, in lieu of using the *one* Talent committed to them, they go and bury it in the Earth slothfully and criminally; *for he that is unfaithful in a little, will be unfaithful also in much*; and, whilst they pretend to know God, glorify him not as God, but hold the Truth in unrighteous Idolatry; having no Sense of Gratitude or common *Thankfulness* for the Favours and Blessings they daily received from the Hand of his Providence, as the Apostle accuses them: If the Seed of Reason in their Heart, in Fact, neither produc'd God, nor Virtue; but *Dæmons, Images, Chimeras* of all sorts were set up there, as well as in their Temples, as Objects of Worship; and Immoralities and Vices of all Kinds was the Devotion and Religion there; which transform'd them into the Children of the *Devil*, Votaries to him and all his Wickednesses: Is it not just and righteous, at the last Day, that Judgment with Vengeance should take place upon those who thus *know not God*, as well as upon them *who obey not, or believe not*, (when they may do both) *the Gospel of Christ*?

THO' they will not be brought to Account for the two Talents, nor yet for the Five ; yet they must, and ought to give up an Account of the *one* Talent, how they put it to use ; and let them who thus abused it answer as they will, they will be condemn'd out of their own Mouth.

AND if this religious, Reasoning Use of their Talent was, and is in the Power of the Heathen World to have traffick'd withal, at least to have exerted some Industry and Diligence towards pleasing God, who made them to that End of their Being, as the only Way to their Happiness ; if Reason was purposely given them to endeavour to extricate themselves out of those unhappy Circumstances what they can, and it was their Duty to God, and themselves, to do their utmost ; especially since our Author tells them, “ God’s Will is so clearly and fully “ manifested in the Book of Nature, that he “ who runs may read it.”* How then can it be a *Crime* in these Heathens personally to endeavour to relieve themselves in their deplorable State, as he calls it ? Was ever such a Contradiction as this is, to Reason, common Sense, and to himself, ever before offer’d by any Master-Author to his Disciples ? When they know it to be one of the declar’d Purposes of his Book, to set up the *Sufficiency* of Human Reason independent of Revelation, as perfect and compleat, in all Parts of the World, to answer up to the *five* Talents, and do every thing explicitly that the Gospel of *Christ* can direct, towards pleasing God.

* *Christianity as old*, p. 23, 24.

THE Prayer of *Simplicius* at the Conclusion of his Comments on *Epiet.* speaks with more Modesty, and breathes Sentiments the reverse to these prophane Writers: “ Grant, I beseech thee, O Lord, the Giver and Guide of all Reason, that we may be always mindful of the Dignity, of the Nature, and the Privileges thou hast honour’d us withal; that we may act in all things as becomes free Agents to the subduing and governing our Passions, to the refining them from Flesh and Sense, and to the rendring them subservient to excellent Purposes. Grant us also thy favourable Assistance to the reforming and directing our Judgment; and enlighten us with thy Truth, that we may discern those Things that are really Good, and having discover’d them, may love and cleave stedfastly to the same. And, finally, disperse, we pray thee, those Mists which darken the Eyes of our Mind, that so we may have a perfect Understanding, and know both God and Man.” Would any such Persons reject, would they not greatly rejoice at a Saviour, and a Revelation from God? Tho’ it is *impossible* for any Man, in any part of the World, to come to God as his Servant, or please him as his Worshipper, without believing him a *Rewarder* of those that seek and give their Diligence to please him; which is, as I have often shewn, an *implicit* Faith in *Christ*, the Mediator of the New Testament, the everlasting Covenant, which gave, and gives the distinguishing Excellency and Virtue to his saving Gospel, or the true Means of pleasing God, from the beginning of the World, to the final End thereof.

IT is true, the Author of *Wisdom* has well observ'd, speaking of the Degeneracy of these *Gentiles*, *As for the Mysteries of God* [the original *Promise*] *they knew them not; neither hoped they for the Wages of Righteousness, nor discern'd a Reward for blameless Souls* *, meaning an eternal Reward agreeable to the Immortality of the Soul, as it follows. Yet the Desire of that Happiness, surely, could never be implanted in Man in vain; and to what other Purpose, comparatively, could Reason be given but to endeavour for this Happiness, by securing the Favour of God in the best manner they could? If God does not require of any Man what is explicitly impossible for him to do in order to attain it; it follows, that the *using* Talent of Reason put into their Power and Trust was, and is sufficient on their Part, exercis'd as it ought, to attain that Degree of Happiness apportion'd to their *one* Talent, which, according as it is used, exceeds in the Proportion of *ten* to *one*, (considering the Difficulties they lie under; or as it is express'd in *Luke xix. 17. Because thou hast been faithful* IN A VERY LITTLE, *have thou Authority over ten Cities; the Mina, Pound, in proportion to five Talents is very little indeed*) in the State allotted to them; as the Proportion allotted to Christians seems to exceed in Degree of Happiness, as *five* improved to five, to *one* improved to one in the different Use of their Talents. And the Kind of Happiness may differ as the Government over *ten, five, &c. Cities*, from the JOY OF THE LORD; wherein there is a *Prophet*, and a *righteous Man's* Re-

* Chap. ii. 22.

ward, and the *Skining of those like Stars, who convert others*; and one Star differing from another in Glory. The *whole* of future Happiness being the free Gift of God, and no Claim of Debt or Merit for our best Behaviour, God is not oblig'd to distribute it by the Measures of *Equality*, but from his Grace and Favour by the Measures of *Equity*, bearing *Proportion* or Analogy to our Behaviour, in the Difference and Degrees of one Star out-shining another in Glory. That Position therefore of our Author so often repeated, that the End of God's creating Man, was to give and confer on him *all the Happiness his Nature is capable of**, must be fundamentally false; and is such a levelling Principle, as destroys both the Wisdom, and Goodness of God, and all the Varieties of his Favour. The very Nature and Freedom of the Goodness of the wisest Being is establish'd in the various Instances and *Degrees* of communicating itself, and consequently in the *various Time* of doing it. I say, to recover that Primæval, Fundamental Truth, that God is a *Rewarder*, &c. and therefore a Pardoners of Sin and Infirmary, is sufficient in their confus'd Knowledge, to comfort them in their virtuous Endeavours, that God is no *Respecter of Persons*, nor anywise austere or unkind to any that are diligent in the Pursuit of his Favour, and their own Happiness. God is a *Rewarder* of all who attentively seek him, whilst he is himself a *Reward* to some who prove Heroick in their Faith in him. In a State where all is *intellectual* Pleasure, to *see him as he is*, to *know even as we are known*, is the most felicitating Reward. New Perfections (for with respect

to number they are infinite) will be continually discovering themselves in God, and that will be the never-ceasing Food of eternal Love and Fruition; Light is the first and fairest of sensible Entertainments, but in his Light who is the *Father of Lights*, we shall continually see Light, and in the increase of that, new and various Things continually.

YET I chuse rather to apply, in this Case, the Distinction of a very ingenious Writer*, between a *remote*, and a *proximate* Sufficiency; and adopt the former as weaker in Efficacy and Practice, and more suitable to the State of the Degeneracy: And I beg leave of him, whoever he is, to cite the following Passage. “ Now I
“ look upon the Bulk of the *Heathen* World
“ in such kind of Circumstances as these. Reason, so far as it relates to God and Religion,
“ and eternal Happiness, seems to be asleep in
“ them; some happy Hints may possibly
“ awaken it, and set it a moving in a right Channel, tho’ without Revelation it will ever be
“ ready to wander, and go astray. Reason in
“ far the greatest Part of them, seems to be
“ intoxicated and drawn away into endless
“ Fooleries, instead of Religion, led astray by
“ wild Appetite and Passion, perverted by a
“ thousand Prejudices, and by the universal
“ Customs of the Country, and seduced far
“ from all the Paths of Truth and Duty. Now
“ if any Occurrence arise which may bring
“ them to a Stand, free from the intoxicating
“ Influences of Prejudice, Custom, Passion, &c.
“ ’tis possible, in the Nature of Things, that

* *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, pag. 103.

CHAP. " the Powers of Reason may then trace out
 XIX. " such a Religion, which, if sincerely practised,
 " may lead them to final Happiness †."

3. THIS Mediator, who gave himself a Ransom for all, is to be *testified in due Time*. As it pleased the manifold Wisdom of God, by various Steps and Degrees, to carry on the Design of fulfilling the *Promise* for the Space of about 4000 Years after it was first made upon the first Entrance of Sin into the World; what can so much previous Solemnity, for so long a Time, intend to teach us, but that this *great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh*, was the Master-piece of Divine Counsel and Wisdom, and that all the lesser Dispensations of Providence are subservient to, and accomplish'd by it?

DR. Clarke's Observation upon *Is. xi. 4, &c.* and *Revel. xiv. 6. xi. 15.* is worthy of Notice: *I saw an Angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Nation and Kindred, and Tongue and People — And there were great Voices in Heaven, saying; The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* " Whether these
 " and the like Prophecies shall yet finally have
 " a *literal* Accomplishment, by an universal
 " Prevalency of the Gospel of Peace on Earth;
 " or whether they shall have their full and literal Completion, *only* in that *new Heaven and*
 " *new Earth* wherein *Righteousness* is to dwell for
 " ever; is still a Secret in the Breast of Providence, which we ought not to be over confi-

“dent in explaining*.” I need not repeat what was observ’d before of the Fulness and Fitness of the Time of his Manifestation; but proceed to shew the Falshood of our Author’s Assertion, that the Gospel was publish’d but to a *small Part of Mankind*. CHAP. XIX.

FOR, is it not well known, that in the Space of 300 Years it spread all over the *Roman Empire*; and beyond its Limits, as far Eastward as *Malabar*, by the Preaching of *St. Thomas*? That Empire was then so general, as to be call’d the *World*, *ὅλην μένη*. It was, without doubt, the most civiliz’d Part of the Terraqueous Globe, the most susceptible and fittest to receive the Gospel. After *Kings* and *Magistrates* embraced it, Miracles, which were to carry the Work up Hill, were withdrawn; and the Propagation of it afterwards committed to human Care and Means; and that is one of the standing Reasons assign’d, why it is *good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour*, to pray for **KINGS** and **ALL** that are in *Authority*, because, as it follows, *he would have ALL MEN to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*. When the Civil Power ceases to oppose, the Arguments and Objections of its other Adversaries make it only the more glorious to all the unprejudic’d World. And in this, do not all the Kings of the Earth execute the Commands of God, without either being of his Council, or in his Confidence?

THE Gospel of *Christ*, being a Religion perfectly fitted and design’d for all Mankind, has

* *Posthum. Sermon. V. III. pag. 294, 5.*

therefore

CHAP. therefore made Provision, by its Precepts and
 XIX. Commands to teach and make Disciples, for a
 ~~~~~ successive and perpetual Promulgation, till all  
 Nations and People come explicitly to the Know-  
 ledge of the Truth: Whereas the *Jewish* Reli-  
 gion, being in its Nature temporary, and local  
 to a District, has no *Precept* for making Prose-  
 lytes. And what human Means can be judg'd  
 more likely either to extend it widely, or trans-  
 mit it safely to the latest Posterity, than the  
 Sway of *Princes*, the Trafficking Opportunities  
 of *Merchants* who search all Corners of the  
 Earth for Gain, and the tender Care which Na-  
 ture has planted in *Parents* for communicating  
 successively to their Off-spring such an important  
 Treasure, pure and uncorrupt?

No Fault therefore in the Gospel, if it has  
 not shed its benign Influences much farther. But  
 great and lamentable Fault there has been in  
 many of its Professors in the *East*; who by their  
 fierce and bloody Disputes, join'd to wicked  
 Lives, in the *Nestorian* Controversy, weaken'd  
 the Cause of Christianity, then, and there, in  
 the most flourishing State, to that Degree, that  
 it fell an easy Prey (the Judgment of God assist-  
 ing its own Threats of taking away their *Candle-  
 stick*) to the ambitious worldly Spirit of *Mahomet*  
 and his Religion; to the losing more Ground  
 in *Asia*, *Africa*, and part of *Europe*, than it now  
 possesses elsewhere. And such a vast Territory,  
 and so many Millions of Souls, now lie waste of  
 a *Mediator* between God and Man, partly owing  
 to the Folly and worldly Spirit of the Eastern  
 Christians, “ drawing the abstrusest Niceties  
 “ into Controversy, which were of little or no  
 “ Moment

“ Moment to that which is the chief End of our CHAP.  
“ holy Christian Religion \*.” XIX.

SOME Commentators on the *Revelations* apply *Abaddon*, *Apollyon*, to *Mahomet* and his Successors †. And I would observe, that in destroying Idolatry in *Arabia*, they ran into the other Extreme of *destroying*, (that being the Meaning of *Apollyon*) the very Notion of a *Mediator* between God and Man, that Foundation Principle of true Religion, Root and Branch. They don't substitute *Mahomet* in that Office of *Christ* of being a *perpetual Mediator and Intercessor*; they even *intercede* and *pray* for their PROPHET in their *Liturgy* ||. The *Alcoran* seems to have transcribed the glaring *Pharisaical* Part of *Judaism* into their Religion, a great Zeal for *Fasting* and giving *Alms*, and many *Prayers* to be seen of Men as an *opus operatum*, and likewise great Precaution against some *outward* Pollutions, whilst *Lust* the Head of the concupiscible, and *Wrath* and *Cruelty* the Head of the irascible Passions, are both indulg'd to the Full; without any Provision for *inward* Religion, guarding the Thoughts and Heart, where the Fountain of Religion is to be sought and secured. But in throwing out all use of a *Mediator*, for Access to, and Acceptance with God in their Repentance, Prayers, and sincere Endeavours to serve him, they manifest their Ignorance and Inconsideration of the *true Nature* of God, and Man, which the Voice of Nature proclaims over the *Pagan* World (in their Application to

\* See *Prid. Life of Mahom.* Pref. pag. 7. and *Reland's* Treatise of the *Mahometans*, pag. 165. † See Mr. Pyle on *Rev.* ix. 11. || *Reland*, pag. 117.



*Idols*, as before observ'd) viz. his essential Holiness and Purity, and Man's Sinfulness and Guilt; which lays the Foundation of the Gospel in the Heart of Man, and supposes some *one true Mediator* of Worship, *Christ* reveal'd, and to be reveal'd.

AND therefore as they oppose him in that saving Office, in a great Measure knowing him to be appointed of God to that Office, and confessing him to be the *Messiah*; they may be justly call'd the *Eastern Branch* of *Anti-Christ*; as *Popery* corrupting and idolatrously invalidating that Office by the Worship of Saints and Angels, may be stiled its *Western Branch*. So the judicious Dr. *Prideaux* has observ'd, “ That *Mahomet* began his Imposture about the same Time  
“ that the *Bishop of Rome*, by virtue of a Grant  
“ (A. D. 606.) from the wicked Tyrant *Phocas*,  
“ first assum'd the Title of *universal Pastor*, and  
“ thereon claim'd to himself that *Supremacy*  
“ which he hath been ever since endeavouring  
“ to usurp over the *Church of Christ*. And from  
“ this time both having conspired to found  
“ themselves an *Empire in Imposture*, their Followers  
“ have been ever since endeavouring by  
“ the same Methods, that is, of Fire and Sword,  
“ to propagate it among Mankind; so that  
“ *Anti-Christ* seems at this time to set both his  
“ Feet upon *Christendom* together, the one in  
“ the *East*, and the other in the *West* \*.” And I would add, that as *Christianity* is universally acknowledged by the *Mahometans* to be the *next best* Religion to their own, and they speak many honourable things of Christ, representing *Mabo-*

\* Life of *Mahom.* pag. 16.

met in his Journey to Heaven *applying* to the Intercession of *Jesus*, and begging *his* Prayers for himself, upon any great Alteration (suppose from the *Russian* Power, the Patron of the subdued, once flourishing *Greek* Church there) there seems to be a providential *Back-door* open for Christianity to come in, and recover its place. And when it pleases God to put it into the Hearts of *Popish* Princes to do Justice in restoring the *Key* of Knowledge taken away from them, and their People, by Usurpers of their Rights, (grievous Wolves turning all Religion both the Power and Form of it, into Prince and People's Ignorance and their own filthy Lucre, lordly, but detestable Ambition) pure Religion will enter their Territories, at the *Fore-door*, and the Kingdoms of the Earth will become as well the real, as the profess'd Kingdom of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

GOD having provided sufficient Laws and Remedies in his universal Kingdom of Reason and Righteousness, against Sin and Wickedness, and all moral Evil, if Men in the Liberty of their Will and their common Understanding (the chief *Subjects* of the Kingdom) will be so perverse and obstinate, as to join Hand in Hand and bring in moral Evil like a Flood; he is not oblig'd to step out of the Way of his Providence in governing moral Agents, to put a stop to it, but let it have its Course upon Childrens Children. Yet so wicked and abominable is our Author, as to accuse his Providence as being the Author of it; for is he "who does not hinder  
" a Mischief when it is in his Power, thought  
" much better than he who does it \*?" Can

CHAP. there be a greater Villany imputed to the Governor of the World, excepting that of inditing his Book? It is the same thing, as arraighning him of robbing upon the Highway, and breaking open People's Houses, because he does not interpose to stop and hinder Men in those Mischiefs, or chain up the Devil from tempting them.

“ WHAT human Legislator, says he, if he  
 “ found a Defect in his Laws, and thought it  
 “ for the Good of his Subjects to add new Laws,  
 “ would not promulgate them to all his Peo-  
 “ ple \*.” To which I answer with respect to the heavenly Legislator; he found no Defect in his original Laws; they, being founded in the Nature and Constitution of Things, were very good, as were the Things he made. The Defect sprung up in Man, subject to them, by yielding to Sin and the Tempter; which in a rational Creature is as much a vain Opposition and self-confounding Contradiction to Reason and to that Creature's Dependance upon God, as to the Nature and Constitution of Things; but when perfect Obedience could no longer be observ'd, in great Mercy and Condescension a *New Covenant* was struck in the *Mediator*, for rendring sincere Obedience not only acceptable, but rewardable with an higher Gift of Happiness and eternal Life than ever was before.

NOT that the *Mediator* added any thing new to the original Law, (that eternal Religion of the End, to last and be observ'd in the next future World, as well as in this) which was not

really included in it before, tho' the Degeneracy of Man could not so well discern it; but became the *Head* of the Religion of the Means for Mens performing, in this World, that Religion of the End unto God. And till this new Religion or Law of the Means was actually promulgated to all the Subjects; all, before his coming into the World, and afterwards, every where, shall be intitled to a Benefit from it, using their Reason and Diligence in obeying the former Law, to the best of their Power, coming to God, in that Faith of Nature, believing *that he is, and is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him.* To be a Punisher of Transgression secures the Observance of a Law between a Superior and Inferior; but to be a *Rewarder* of Man's Obedience, which is not due by natural Right, very plainly supposes something more and better than a *natural* Right; implies a *Covenant* or *Promise* of giving what Man could have no Right of claiming, but in virtue of that Promise.

THIS short Faith, *Catholick* to *Mankind*, and plain to every Man's Reason, who would do the Will of God, upon the least Reflection, as it is the true Spirit that enlivens good Works and turns Morality into Religion, by comprizing under it the Idea of a *Rewarder*, the Goodness, Righteousness and Justice of God, the Springs and Powers by which he governs and judges the moral World: This Faith, I say, being religiously observ'd, would have prevented Superstition and Idolatry all the World over; those Innovations and Inventions of *Men* (than which no Invention is more fruitful) for diligently seeking to avail themselves, and please God  
most



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most preposterously, with Service, and by Devotion the reverse of the other, a Contradiction to *his* Nature, and *their own*; compromising their Fears, and compounding their Sins upon the Merits of Ceremonies and Observances foreign to the Repentance of forsaking of them, and disregardful to God's Goodness, and gracious Designs of rewarding them hereafter for faithful Duty. 'Till by degrees the World grew so witty and wise at these Fooleries, that at length by their Wisdom of Imagination, they knew not God; *neither by considering the Works did they acknowledge the Work-Master; tho' by the Greatness and Beauty of the Creatures the Maker of them is proportionably seen.* And, in that Disposition, was the more averse to mind, or prone to forget what he should say to them, in any true Revelation of his Will from Heaven. I shall once more present the Reader with the Words of the aforesaid very ingenious Author.

“ THE King doth not think himself obliged  
 “ every Year, or every Age, to give the rising  
 “ Generation a new and immediate promulga-  
 “ tion of his general Laws, nor of his Act of  
 “ Grace, nor to repeat to them over again the  
 “ Testimony and Proofs of its Royalty and Au-  
 “ thority. Yet the Children being Rebels still,  
 “ may still be continued in their Banishment,  
 “ for their own and their Parents Rebellion, if  
 “ they do not comply with the appointed Me-  
 “ thod in the Act of Grace which was publish'd  
 “ in their Great Grandfathers Days. Is it not a  
 “ common Case among Mankind, that when any  
 “ King makes a *Law with a Penalty*, and pub-  
 “ lishes it once thro' his whole Nation, he doth  
 “ not think himself bound to publish this a-new,  
 “ as

“ as often as new Subjects are born in his Do-  
 “ minions? And yet not only all the present  
 “ Subjects, but their Posterity also, who break  
 “ this Law, are in the common Sense of Man-  
 “ kind, liable to the Penalty, because 'tis sup-  
 “ posed, that Nature obliges Men to commu-  
 “ nicate such necessary Knowledge to their Off-  
 “ spring. Much less would any King, who freely  
 “ publish'd an Act of Grace to Rebels, think  
 “ himself oblig'd in Justice to repeat the Pub-  
 “ lication of this Act to every new Generation  
 “ of Rebels who should rise, and continue in  
 “ the known and wilful Rebellion of their Fa-  
 “ thers ; for since he was not obliged to make  
 “ any such Act of Grace at first, he can never  
 “ be obliged to repeat the Proclamation of it.”  
 “ — The rebellious Children of these rebel  
 “ Subjects may complain indeed, that they were  
 “ never told, nor did they know the general  
 “ Laws of the Kingdom, nor were they ac-  
 “ quainted with the particular Acts of Grace,  
 “ and these special appointed Methods of ob-  
 “ taining Pardon and Favour. But if the ge-  
 “ neral Laws of the Kingdom were so far  
 “ agreeable to the Laws of Reason and Nature,  
 “ that if they would but seriously consider with  
 “ themselves, and set their Reason at work in  
 “ good earnest, they might find out not only  
 “ these *general Laws*, but so much also of the  
 “ *particular Methods of Grace*, as to get some  
 “ Hope of Pardon and Acceptance, if they  
 “ sincerely practis'd them ; then, I say, these  
 “ Children are highly criminal for not applying  
 “ their rational Powers to the Work, and for  
 “ not seeking out and practising all that was  
 “ within the Verge and Compass of their natu-  
 “ ral Powers, in order to be restored to the

CHAP. "Favour of the King. And such criminal  
XIX. "Creatures justly continue under the Displeasure  
"of their Sovereign." \*

4. WE find in the first History of the Propagation of the Gospel, the *Spirit extraordinarily* forbidding the *Apostles* to preach to some Nations, at the Season they intended to do it; and *extraordinarily* beckoning them to others, particularly *Macedonia*. † Which implies that some Times are more critical and seasonable for that Work than others, and that the Dispositions of some People are riper and fitter to receive such an holy Doctrine than others: As if some had improv'd the one Talent committed to them, so as to deserve to have more entrusted with them; for *he that is faithful in a little, is faithful also in much*; and others had taken little or no Care of the Matter. Now that favourable Time, and those Dispositions are known only unto God. St. Chrysost. ‡ explains *due Time*, by *pertinent, suitable*. Clem. Alex. when Men are *studiously disposed* to the Faith. Cornelius, a Roman Officer, the first Gentile Convert, being extraordinary well disposed, and being in the Neighbourhood of the Gospel, was extraordinarily directed by an *Angel* to send for *Peter* to learn it of him. The supine Neglect of others seems to have been the Case of Heathen *Asia* and *Africa*, and some Parts of *Europe*. As to the *West-Indies*, that must, without a Miracle, have been out of the Case of being converted

\* *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, p. 248, 250.

† *Acts* xvi. 6, &c.

‡ *Κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν, κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν πᾶν ὁ ἀνθρώπου*. Apud Mill. Test.

for many Generations, till it was discover'd, and recover'd again to the Communication of this Part of the World. CHAP.  
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THE *Chinese*, who reckon themselves the wisest People in the World, as if they had received the *Ten Pounds* and all the rest of the World but *One Pound* of that Talent, *Reason*, despising others as Fools to them, put their Reason to no other use, in religious Matters (the principal Object of human Understanding) but to strive to out-do one another in multiplying new Idols of Worship; \* and sometimes disgracing old ones upon an unsuccessful Suit to them. They are ingenious at *Civil Arts*, and Laws, but blind and infatuated in burying *Religion* under Heaps of Rubbish and Loads of Superstition. So degenerate is the Wisdom of this World when unassisted by Revelation of the Wisdom from above! The *Candle of the Lord* (their Reason) which should light them to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, they have put under a Bushel, and keep it there, without desiring the Gospel for a *Candlestick*. The *Jesuits* may probably have made some sincere Converts to *Mathematicks*, but few, 'tis fear'd, to Christianity; to be sure, not one to the true Religion of *Jesus*. And in *Japan*, the *Missioners* managed so badly, by carrying the Spirit of the World with them (as *that* sort generally do) to propagate a Religion not of this World; that they gave Occasion to the shutting the Door against it, and its very Name, and brought on

\* Most Learned, and most Idolatrous and Superstitious are very compatible in a Heathen Country, Witness *Athens* and *Egypt*. And now in *China* there is as great a Mob of Gods to be seen.



a perpetual Banishment, by the severest Laws the Wit of Man can invent \*. They may, 'tis true, find the less Difficulty in making Converts in some idolatrous Nations, because there is so great Affinity between the Idolatry and Superstition of the Converter and the Converted; but how great will be the Difficulty of those who come after, who may be willing to undeceive them, what *true Christianity* is?

OTHER Heathens are so far sunk and lost in the slothful Disuse of their *one* Talent, that they seem to require a long Preparation from fore-running Traffick and Commerce to humanize, and rationalize them, before the Pearls of Christianity, the greatest Jewel of Divine or Human Reason, can be received into their Esteem. Gentle Alterations and Comixtures of other Nations may talk and reason them into some Impressions of it, in Process of Time: But it is not for us to know the particular Times and Seasons when the *Fulness* of the Gentiles will come in, God has reserv'd them in his own Power. Elegant are the Observations of the Son of Syrach; *All the Works of the Lord are exceeding good, and whatsoever he commandeth, shall be accomplish'd in due Season.—And none may say, What is this? Wherefore is that? for at a time convenient, they shall all be sought out.†—As his ways are plain to the Holy, so they are a stumbling Block unto the Wicked.‡ He shall give every needful Thing in due Season. So that a Man can't say, this is worse than that; for in time they shall be all well approv'd.¶ In much Knowledge*

\* See Kempher's History.

† Eccles. xxxix. 16, 17.

‡ v. 14.

¶ v. 33, 34.

*the Lord hath divided them, and made their Ways divers.—As the Clay is in the Potters Hand to fashion it at his Pleasure, so Man is in the Hand of him that made him, to render to them as liketh him best.\* The Words of Esdras are considerable, He is patient, and long suffereth those that have sinned, as his Creatures.—And he pardoneth; for if he did not so of his Goodness, that they which have committed Iniquities, might be eased of them, the ten thousandth Part of Men should not remain living. And being Judge, if he should not forgive them that are cured with his Word, and put out the Multitude of Contentions [in the Margin Contempts] there should be very few left, peradventure in an innumerable Multitude, 2 Esd. vii. 64, &c.*

HOWEVER this we all know, that God will judge the World with Righteousness, and the Nations with Equity; that he will be justified in his saying; and clear both when he judges, and when he is judged. Who shall accuse thee for the Nations that perish, whom thou hast made? or who shall come to stand against thee to be revenged for the unrighteous Men?—For as much as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all things righteously; thinking it not agreeable with thy Power, to condemn him that hath not deserv'd to be punish'd.† That to whom little is committed, of them much will not be required. That few Stripes will be the Portion of those who knew not their Lord's Will; few, in Comparison of those who know, who despise, who carelessly perform it. That they will be tried and acquitted according to what they have, and not according to what they had not. And

\* Eccles. xxxiii. 11, 12.

† Wisd. xii. 12.

CHAP. so all Mouths will, then, be stopp'd with the  
 XIX. Plenitude of Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness  
 of the Divine Dispensations.

AND now we may even know, and be assur'd, that the Dispensing the different Talents, and affording different Degrees of Means unto Men, dispers'd over the Earth, is *according to the Counsel of his Will*, which is *unsearchable* by us, and *past finding out*, any farther, than to stop the Mouth of *Deists*, who are such importunate and presumptuous Objectors, and Intruders also to know the *whole Scheme, Order, or State of Things*, as well as God, or else allow no Wisdom in his Ways: tho', in the Nature of Things, it is impossible for them, or any Mortal, to have any other than broken Views; their great Grandfathers seeing one part of the Scene; themselves the middle Act, or some part of it; and their great Grandchildren the Conclusion.\* It is therefore truly *sublime* (being exactly agreeable to the *Nature* of the Subject) for us to profess our Ignorance and Defect, when we speak of the Ways of Providence, or offer to assign *all particular* Reasons of his Conduct: and consequently to expect, or argue otherwise, must be Pedantry and Bombast.

BUT I hasten to give a more particular and PROPER Answer to *these* Objectors. Do our *Deists* ask Questions of those Things? I

\* This must necessarily be so; because all Parts of the *Drama* of God, the *Oikonomia* of Providence can't be upon the Stage at once, this World can't contain them. Therefore some must go off, when it is the Time for others to come on.

shall not answer by asking them Questions, but return *the fitting* Answer to them.

AND since this is a Difficulty of the *Deists* own starting, they ought to have the Edification of a *proper* Answer.

I. I observe to them that this Objection comes with a very ill Grace from these sort of Persons. They blame God for not communicating the Gospel to the Heathens, upon a Supposition, that he made every Man to partake of as much Happiness as his Nature is capable of. I grant the Supposition, that Christianity duly *known, profess'd, believ'd, and obey'd*, according to their own Stile, will make a Man as happy as his Nature is capable of. Is not this Happiness offer'd to, is it not at the same time slighted by *them* with particular Contumely? If the Heathens were to follow their Example, must they not do the same? Wherefore then do *they* accuse the Conduct of Providence for not proposing that, which they advise *them* to reject, or for not bringing that to Light, which they labour to bury in Darkness; extolling, as they do, Heathen Darkness, and preferring it in Word and Deed before the Light, knowingly, and professedly.

FOR so is the deplorable Matter of Fact, they hinder the Gospel of all the good Effect they can, at Home; and yet with ridiculous Peevishness, throw the blame upon God for not spreading it Abroad: And as fast as Providence favours the spreading the Gospel Abroad, in its Truth and Simplicity, they follow God as fast as ever they can, with their wicked disappoint-



CHAP. ing, self accusing Opposition, to overthrow and  
 XIX. destroy it utterly.\* So intent are they in *com-*  
*passing Sea and Land to make one Profelyte!* so  
 confederate in the Wickedness of dispensing the  
*Opiate* of Unbelief to all the World.

II. I OBSERVE that the Religion of Nature, which they pretend to recommend with so much Zeal at Home, and Abroad, in lieu of the Gospel, is bound upon the Obedience and Observance of the *Christian*, with far superior Force, accumulated Authority, and deeper and more insinuating Impression of superadded Mercies and Kindnesses, than Natural Religion can pretend to; and therefore, if they had any real Value, or the least Degree of sincere Friendship and Zeal for *that*, they ought to turn Christian for the sake thereof, and persuade every Body else to do so. Taking that Religion in the highest Sense they ever extend it to, as the *Law and Will* of God; still as that same Law and Will of God is in the Christian Revelation, *written*, collected together and perfected to the highest Pitch of human Reason (as *Deists* themselves acknowledge, and dishonestly borrow their best Things from it.) If this best End is strengthen'd and facilitated, 1. By the

\* “ There seems to be a form'd Design among *some* in  
 “ *England*, to make us irrecoverably worse, both in *Princi-*  
 “ *ples and Behaviour*; at least several Books to that End  
 “ have of late been scatter'd over all our *Colonies*; such as  
 “ the *Rights of the Christian Church, and the Defence of it*;  
 “ the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*; the *Fable of*  
 “ the *Bees*; *Lyon's Infallibility of Human Judgment*; many of  
 “ the *Socinian Tracts*; *Woolton's Discourses*, &c. and other  
 “ Performances of the same Tendency” See a Letter to  
 the Bishop of London from an Inhabitant of the *Leeward*  
*Islands*, p. 17.

best

best MEANS, and greatest Mercies in the CHAP. World. 2. By INTERNAL AIDS. XIX. 3. By EXTERNAL MOTIVES of *future Rewards and Punishments*. 4. By HELPS AND INSTRUMENTS. Is not Natural Religion, the Religion of the End, secured to Practice, and endeared to due Performance by all these and many more Advantages, to every Christian, than to any *modern* Deist?

DOES not these *four* added to the Talent of *Reason*, the common Blessing of Nature, make up the *five Talents* committed to their Trust, for which they will assuredly be brought to an Account at the last Day? Is not the *one Talent* REASON, to be improved and cultivated by Consideration and Reflection on the Attributes of God, the Relations, and Truth of Things? Are not the *two Talents*, REASON and REVELATION, to be encreased and multiplied by the Use of Reason, which leads to Faith; and by the Use of Faith, which exalts and comforts Reason in the Worship and Service, and in the Knowledge of God, and Ourselves, how to Repent, how to Pray, how to Obey? Are not the *Three Talents* (supposing such a Distribution) INTERNAL AID *of the Spirit*, added to the other two, to be occupied and made most of, by adding the right Use of the last to the two former; *waiting upon* it by due Compliance, augmenting and strengthening it by *Prayer* to God, in the Name of *Christ*? Are not the *four Talents* REASON, REVELATION OF CHRIST, INTERNAL AIDS, EXTERNAL MOTIVES, greatly encreasable by the additional Exercises of *Hope* and *Fear*, sedulously

CHAP. lously plying their future Objects and Concerns?  
 XIX. But how easily, sociably, and familiarly does  
 the *five Talents*, HELPS and INSTRUMENTS, added to the other four, produce five Talents *more*, where any tolerable Care and Fidelity is present to suffer the appointed Helps and Instruments to remove all Obstructions, and push their Skill and Abilities in fructifying *each* of the Talents, to the *Joy of the Lord*, that gave them, and the much greater Joy of the Servant that used them? They bounce, and riot even to Licentiousness, in the Argument of God's *Natural Goodness*, yet, when that Goodness has abounded from Heaven, explicitly and most evidently *four-fold* more than the common Blessings of Nature, to lead *them* to Repentance; they trample that augmented conspicuous Goodness under Foot, scorn the most Divine Invitations to Repentance, and hate the Light of the best Method, that the Reason of Heaven could concert, or Earth approve of, for their Reconciliation to God, and Righteousness.

AND therefore the Conclusion both in Heaven and Earth, rises up in Judgment against them, in all Charity, as well as Justice, pronouncing their Friendship and Zeal for Natural Religion all Sham, and Hypocrisy; and that the true Tendency of their affected officious Zeal, in all its Operations, (according to the late Endeavours of some of them, who best understand their own Schemes and Views, for destroying the *Liberty* of Human Agents, and likewise the very Distinction between *Good* and *Evil*, inherent in the eternal Law of Reason and Morality, a Scheme that dethrones God, and *villainizes* Human Nature at once; makes Virtue, and  
 Vice

Vice a Creature of *Human Laws*, vagrant, CHAP. mutable, whimsical, like the *Fashions* of Coun- XIX. tries) the true Tendency, I say, of their Proceedings most manifestly is, to subvert and disannul Natural Religion, as well as Christianity, and to effect the former through the Sides of the latter.

III. I OBSERVE to them, that *they* have receiv'd the *five* Talents, and bury all five in the Ground; and therefore are in a *four-fold* worse State, than those who receiv'd but *one* Talent, and did in like manner. These last argued their Excuse from the *Austerity* of God; which being an egregious Fallacy in Reasoning, as well as a prodigious lazy Deceit and Treachery to themselves, they were justly condemn'd out of their own Mouths. The *modern* Deist steps up, at the Day of Judgment, and according to his usual Fallacy, argues his Excuse from the *Goodness* of God.—“ Lord, if thou hadst not  
“ been so *very good* to me, I had been a better  
“ Man! 'Tis true, you preach'd in our Streets,  
“ and laid down your Life for Sinners, and I  
“ was sufficiently acquainted with your Gospel,  
“ but I did not think you was in earnest, neither  
“ did I care to be oblig'd to Duty by too many  
“ Reasons and Arguments, or to run those  
“ *Hazards* of being good! ”— To whom the  
Lord may be suppos'd to reply; “ O thou  
“ most wicked Servant, thou condemnest thy  
“ self out of thine own Mouth: *Is thine Eye*  
“ *evil, because I am good?* Thine Iniquities are  
“ enhanced from my abundant Goodness! To  
“ all thy Sins thou hast added the blackest In-  
“ gratitude against Heaven, and the horriest  
“ Impiety upon Earth, in denying any Possibi-  
“ lity



CHAP. " lity of any Revelation or Commerce from  
 XIX. " Heaven, between God and his Creature Man,  
 " a Father and his own Children! *Five Talents*  
 " thou hast receiv'd, and for the Abuse of every  
 " one of them thou shalt answer! Thou vainly  
 " thoughtest thy self an *Angel* in Understand-  
 " ing! Go thou therefore to the Flames, the  
 " hottest Flames, prepared for those *Apostate*  
 " wicked Spirits! Ignorance may move Pity,  
 " but CONTEMPT of *Goodness* can de-  
 " serve no Mercy!"

FOR indeed, the true Argument of the *Hazard* from the Advantages of the Gospel, above mention'd by the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. turns wholly against themselves. When God gives a Man a great Estate; and there is a *Hazard* in not using it well; where does it lie? In the Estate? or in the User and Occupier of it? If it is in his Power to improve and raise himself upon the Occasion, and by good Use lay up a good Foundation against the Time to come, ought he to reject the Blessing, or refuse the Trust? Or, if a particular Body of People receive a Charter from their Sovereign of singular explicit Grants and Privileges, upon very easy Conditions; is it right in any of them, to spurn at it, or take Occasion from that particular obliging Goodness and Foundation of Gratitude, in being so *particularly* favour'd above others, ungratefully to arraign the Sovereign, because the same Charter is not as explicitly given to all the World, and all at once; or to draw up a Manifesto, as they have done, to the rest of the World, that they look upon him to be very silly and impertinent to offer *them* such a Favour; that they will run no risk of any extraordinary

traordinary Obligation from him, and therefore CHAP.  
throw it back in his Face. XIX.

BUT, if there is a severe Penalty annex'd to such a brutish and inhuman Usage, ought not the true Rational, instead of the false *Panick* Fear, to seize such Wretches? What a dreadful accumulating Hazard they must needs run, by such a Treatment of their most benign, potent Sovereign! In this Country how should they bless and consider themselves as born to Virtue and to the best Religion of the Means for attaining it? under Disadvantages and Incumbrances of Inclinations to the contrary, it is some Degree of Virtue in the Heathens to strive after the Religion of the End; but for the other not to endeavour after it by the facilitating Means of Christianity, must be extreme Damnation at that Day, when their Iniquities will convince them to their Faces.

THEY give all Heathens a Claim of Merit to the Means of the Gospel, yet themselves enjoy it, alas! beyond their Merit, only to make a Mock at it, and receive eternal Scorn for their Pains. And therefore the Virtues of an honest Heathen doing their best in Repentance, and Prayer, and sincere Obedience with an Intention of pleasing God, in the Influence of that Belief, *that he is a Rewarder*, will be made acceptable to God thro' the unknown Mediator, who died for them; whilst the Repentance and Prayer of those who disdainfully reject him, where he is propos'd, and vouched by the strongest Testimonials, will not be accepted of God, nor recommended by the Mediator. For these Men to hope Acceptance, as long as they continue  
in

CHAP. in the same Mind, is to make those equal in  
 XIX. God's Favour, whose Actions and Behaviour are  
 unequal: It may be charitably expected there-  
 fore that the Virtues of the former will be  
*Christen'd* with Acceptation, whilst the seeming  
 Virtues of the latter, I mean the *Infidel Deist*,  
 destitute of, nay scorning the *real Principle*, will  
 be disdain'd by him, who only gains Admittance  
 to, and Acceptance with their God.

AND that the Sins of the former will be but  
 obscure, and to be winked at; at the same, the  
 Sins of the other are *splendid* with a Witness,  
 even unto Infamy, calling to Heaven for Ven-  
 geance; which seems to make that Position,  
*that Man in his Natural State, can't turn, or pre-  
 pare himself for good Works,* to be remarkably  
 truest with respect to *modern Deists*, who *resolve*  
 to adhere to their *Natural State*, in despite of the  
 Christian spiritual one, which the Revelation of  
*Jesus Christ* would put them into.

IF they had any Sense of Gratitude, they  
 should thank God, that they were born since the  
 Advent of *Christ*, in a *Christian Country*, and a  
*Protestant Nation*; if it was but in Imitation of  
*Plato*, who thank'd Providence, that he was  
 born in *Greece*, and not among the Barbarians;  
 and in the Days of *Socrates*, from whom he re-  
 ceiv'd that Knowledge and Instruction which  
 render'd him so eminent; and, I hope, was a  
 Preparative for another World. And conse-  
 quently, that the Degeneracy of many Heathens  
 sunk even into some Degrees of Stupidity ap-  
 proaching to Brutality, is not so bad, as the  
 others INFIDELITY, and APOSTACY from  
 Christianity. For *these* see, and have the best  
 Opportunities

Opportunities of seeing, therefore their Sin and CHAP. XIX.  
 Condemnation remaineth of loving Darkneſs rather than Light. *I may well then take to witneſs the Grace of the Pagan Deifts againſt the modern Deifts, as ſo much worſe than Heathens! 2 Eſd. i. 37.* And as the Obligations of a moral Agent riſe in Number from the Knowledge and Publication of the Divine will, the Magnitude and Proportion of that manifold Obligation may be clearly collected from the Clearneſs of the Evidence, the Reaſonableneſs, and Uſefulneſs of the Revelation, which ſurrounds *theſe*, and is ſhut out from the Eyes of the other: It will ever remain true, and irrefragable alſo, that *where the Goſpel is ſo publiſh'd*, it is *absolutely* neceſſary to Salvation, and there is an indiſpenſable Neceſſity of receiving and believing it; whiſt the *Pagans*, in their ignorant State, are excuſed of that Neceſſity, till it is effectually offer'd to them: Mean time, they are not excluded from the common Benefits and extenſive Salvation of it, to ſome of the many Manſions of Happineſs, prepar'd for thoſe who diligently ſeek to pleaſe God: And that the *Sufficiency* of Reaſon may be a very good Plea for *their* Guidance, whiſt it can be none at all to a *modern* Deift, who wilfully turns away from a greater Light.

As many Heathens as practice Virtue, and deſire the Aids of Heaven, with a View principally to another World, diligently ſeeking to pleaſe God in proſpect of his being a *Rewarder* (and ſuch he is only through the Mediator) have a right kind, though imperfect Faith, have ſuch Objects, due Intention and Direction of their Virtue, as God requires, ſuch as only conſtitutes Religion towards him; and conſequently, are



CHAP. more than in a *possible* Way of pleasing him ;  
 XIX. whilst the *modern* Deist wilfully spurning his *Rewards*, and the *Mediator* appointed by him, and all those *virtuous Intentions* and *Dependencies*, is under an *impossible* Way of pleasing God.

IV. I MIGHT observe to them, that this Objection of theirs with respect to *Providence*, does in Fact overtake them in regard to their Natural Religion. “ If all Mankind are Creatures of the same Creator, and Fellow-Creatures with one another, must not all their religious Duties, as they are Creatures of the same God, and Fellow-Creatures with one another, be the same \* ? ” Yet *their Natural Religion*, either as to Uniformity, or Universality in the *Pagan Religions*, is observed to be in Theory, and Practice, in vast unequal Degrees ; from some Knowledge of God, to no Notion at all. But these Matters have been urged by others with great Advantage of Reasoning, therefore I pass them over.

I WOULD only put a civil Question to them ; since it is undeniable Matter of Fact, that *here a Bit* of Reason, and *there a Bit* of Reason is dispens'd to these *Pagans* ; is God, or Man in the Fault ? Does God do this, or suffer it to be done *knowingly*, or *ignorantly* ? Let them answer which way they will, they are not only fast in the same Trap they lay for others, but by the Tenor of their own Argument, they sink into *Atheism*. For, if the high-priz'd disputatic *Bit* of Reason that fall to their Share is so miserably cultivated, as to reject future Rewards and

\* *Christianity as old*, &c. pag. 174, 361.

Punishment in the distributive Sense, that rejects the *moral* Attributes of God; and that sets aside God, as a *Governor*; and that to all Intents and Purposes *banishes* his Existence. They may if they please, by their Management of their *Bit* of Reason, be at the Head of the *Animal* World, that is solely govern'd by *sensible* Rewards and Punishments; but then, they must be contented to subside *below* *Man*, whose Characteristick is, a *Medium* between Brute and Angel. The *Angel* has his Reward in being Religious, and continues to be so upon the *intrinsic* Merit of Virtue, that he may not lose the Reward; and therefore *Man's* Reason and Distinction is, to aim at their Reward, to animate him to attain their Virtue in a State competent to himself hereafter. But as these high-spirited Persons disdain those Prospects, they must necessarily fall short of those Attainments, which make them *Man*, and make them *Religious*. And therefore how certain soever, how manifestly certain soever *other* human Creatures appear to be destitute of Religion, still they are upon a Par with these *Belles Lettres*; because, sunk as they are, they are nevertheless, equally at the Head of the *Animal* World? What then do these refin'd Wits, these *Railleurs*, get by these low Arguments, but to be convinc'd that Religion, Christian Religion is both Wit, and Wisdom?

V. I WOULD particularly observe to modern Deists that their Scheme of *Morality*, or *Natural Religion*, is fundamentally wrong; it is a Body without a Head; they must begin their System all over again. If they would entitle the Practiser to any Benefit, they must lay the Foundation where his Hope lies, in a future State, in

CHAP. Faith and Dependance upon a rewarding Provi-  
 XIX. dence ; of which Christianity is the clearest  
 Evolution, and Demonstration in the World.  
 For as the End of Virtue is to *please* God,  
 the Foundation of Virtue standeth sure, and is  
 stamp'd in eternal Characters and Relations ever  
 since the contrary of Virtue, Sin, enter'd our  
 sublunary World, *without Faith it is impossible*  
*to please God* ; and what is that Faith that is the  
 Regent of all Human Virtue ? *That God is, and is*  
*a Rewarder, &c.* The Morality of the Heathens,  
 who knew not the Motives these reject, is there-  
 fore preferable to their less moral Scheme. That  
*Catholick Faith, that God is a Rewarder of those who*  
*diligently seek to please him*, obvious to the reason-  
 ing Faculty, and universally diffused to the Ex-  
 pectation of *Mankind*, who would be Religious  
 towards God (though derived from the original  
*Promise*) in effect secures, and implicitly ac-  
 knowledges the G O S P E L, or the true *moral*  
 Motives of the Christian Religion. For if God  
 is a *Rewarder*, that secures and supposes their  
*Access* to and *Acceptance* with him, and Admit-  
 tance into *Heaven*, which are the three sanctify-  
 ing Benefits of *Jesus Christ our Saviour* : And  
 convinces the Judgment of the Reasonableness of  
 depending upon God for their Happiness, in  
 their best Endeavours for securing his Favour,  
 with respect to the Distributions of a Life to  
 come ; at the same time it has its religious Ope-  
 rations, in subduing the Will and Affections, the  
 moral, disobedient, and most ungovernable Part  
 in Man. In this Faith *Enoch, Noah, Job, &c.*  
 pleased God, steer'd their Course by this Pole  
 Star, and passed safe through this troublesome  
 World. In this Expectation, and Reasoning  
 upon the Goodness of God, *Secrates*, and innum-  
 merable

merable others in all Ages of the World, to be collected from the four Winds, under Heaven, though explicitly ignorant of the true Mediator *Jesus Christ*; yet *trusting* religiously in God, that the *Judge of the whole Earth* will at last *do right* to all his Creatures, when he takes an Account, and finally makes a Discrimination of Virtue, and Vice, worthy of his holy Nature, and his wise Government; will nevertheless through him, who equally died for *them*, find Acceptance with God, to be entitled to his rewarding Favour.

THAT this is the only true Way of knowing, teaching, or practising Morality (or, in their own Stile, to *know, profess, believe, and practise* it) is demonstrably evident from the Method of the Teacher of all Righteousness, the best Preacher of Morality in the World, as they themselves acknowledge; who, when he first open'd to the World his most super-excellent Morality, both with respect to the End, and to the Means of his Religion, crowns every one of his *Eight Beatitudes*, severally, with a *particular Reward*. This is the Reason why the Gospel is so constantly represented under the Notion of a *Kingdom*; which supposes a *Judge*; which includes *Rewards and Punishments* eminently distinguish'd upon the obedient, and disobedient to the Laws of the Kingdom. And it seems pretty remarkable, that the Commendations, Threatnings, and Encouragements to the seven Churches of *Asia*, and so to all succeeding Churches, *Rev. ii. and iii.* turn upon those Ends of Religion, or Deviations from them (the *Eight Beatitudes*) and the Means of attaining them, *viz.* Faith in Christ, under several Ideas

Z 2

of



CHAP. of Salutation, with much the same sort of Rewards in his Hand, as observed before. And it is observable that *Tully* \* brings *Scipio* confessing himself much more active and vigilant in the Race and Pursuit of Virtue, from the Supposition of having Heaven for his *Prize*.

BUT *these* Gentlemen, wiser in their own vain Conceit than all other Teachers, reject the Resurrection of the Body, reject *future Rewards* and *Punishments* as an *Heresy*, in their general System of Morality; one of them admitting the Thoughts only in a particular Case, as observ'd before; when they speak of them generally as a Principle of Virtue and Religion, I appeal to all their Readers whether it is not most constantly, if not always, with Contempt and Derision? What is that but obstinately declaring how much they are bent to reproach and oppose God, the Constitution of Things, and the Practice of all wise Men in the World? And with the like Self-conceit of Sufficiency of *Knowledge*, disbelieve with the old *Gnostick* Hereticks, the *future Judgment of Quick and Dead*?

AND thus separating the Body from the Spirit that enlivens it, they make a dead Carcase of Morality. Shut themselves out from the Pale of future Happiness and Salvation: And sooner will the *Publicans* and *Harlots*; *Hottentots*, and *Laplanders* enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and true Religion, than these modern *Pharisees* in Morality. They suppose an End, without competent Means, and Motives in the moral or religious Conduct of Man; which is as

\* *Somno Scipionis.*

enormous an Absurdity, as in Nature, to expect an Effect without a Cause. They divorce the Performance of Duty to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves, from the true Obligations and moral Reasons of those Duties. They separate and distinguish Virtue from *Religion*, or what amounts to the same, Morality from true real Christianity ; which is putting asunder what God, and Reason, and the Constitution of Things have most surely join'd together. And so, by a Scheme of Irreligion and Confusion resolutely divorce themselves from the Favour of God, the common Honesty, common Reason, common Faith, of Mankind.

THIS *Principle* of Principles, especially in its Evolution of the *Mediator*, seems to be that *Desideratum* or wanted *Medium*, for making manifest and projecting the Light of Proof for exhibiting a *Demonstration* of true Morality and Religion, which the great Mr. *Locke* perhaps had not the full Notion of in his frequent Declarations.; for still \*, (tho' invited) he declined to give the Sample, how Morality is *capable* of Demonstration; by which he must mean the Natural Religion of Man as he is a Sinner, manifested as we see it has been in all its Dependencies, by that Light which came into the World to render it plain and perspicuous.

THIS great Fundamental of Natural Religion, that God is a *Rewarder*, &c. without Faith in which *it is impossible to please him*, effectually confutes all the four sorts of Deists.  
1. Those, who allow the Being of a God, but

\* See Mr. *Locke's* Letters,

CHAP. deny his *Providence*. For, if God is a *Rewarder*,  
 XIX. that supposes him a *Punisher*, and that implies  
 Providence and careful Inspection over Mens  
 Actions, in order to support his Justice and  
 Equity in Rewarding and Punishing. 2. Those,  
 who grant a Providence, but deny the *Distinction*  
 between *Good* and *Evil*. For, if God is a *Re-*  
*warder*, and *Punisher*, that can import no less  
 than that there are some Things naturally *pleasing*  
 to him, and some Things *displeasing*; which  
 establishes the eternal Distinction between Good  
 and Evil. 3. Those, who admit Providence,  
 and the Difference of Good and Evil, but deny  
 the *Immortality of the Soul*. For, if Rewards  
 are not distributed in this Life according to  
 Mens Behaviour by the constant distinguishing  
 Balance of Justice, it is indubitably certain, it  
 will be so in an After-state; and that ascertains  
 the Immortality of the Soul. 4. Those, who  
 admit all the three former, but deny the *positive*  
*Distribution* of Rewards and Punishments in the  
 future State; and that Gospel which has brought  
 that Life and Immortality to Light; and by so  
 doing, subvert Natural Religion.

IT is not the Writings and Opinions of these  
 sort of Authors, or any of the ancient Philoso-  
 phers that make and constitute the *Law* of Na-  
 ture, any more than the Opinions and Comments  
 of Lawyers make the Law of the State; but  
 Reference had to *God* the *Legislator*, the supreme  
 Author of Nature, and to the *Sanctions* he has  
 reserv'd and fix'd, and a conscientious Regard to  
 his eternal Justice in seeing them effectually and  
 distinguishingly take place upon the Obedient  
 and Disobedient, that makes it the Law of Na-  
 ture, gives the Authority, and founds the moral  
 Obligation.

Obligation. But those Sanctions, which are to clear up the Conduct of Providence, and vindicate all the Perfections and Attributes of the heavenly Governor, before the Universe of rational Agents, cannot take place without a positive distinguishing Retribution, and a manifest Revelation of the righteous Judge of the whole Earth. Why not then worthy of God, as it is most beneficial to Man, to give unto Man, both a previous *written* Revelation of the Duties and Transgressions of that Law, and likewise the sure *Sanctions* of them? Thus the Law of Nature rightly consider'd, *infers* a reveal'd Law, and *establishest* a written Revelation of the Will of God in the Desires of all Men.

AND as the *Religion* of Nature *truly delineated* is founded, more especially in our present lapsed State, in this great Foundation Truth of all Revelation, and Recovery to Divine Favour, That God is, *and is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, rather than in the Consideration of Truth in *general*; insomuch as *that* particular Truth, in the Reason of Things, actuates and enlivens the whole System of Morality, refers it to God, and turns it into *Religion*; which Truth in general does not, though it contradicts it not.

VIRTUE and Truth are as different as a Part is from the Whole; every Virtue is Truth, but every Truth is not Virtue. When, as in *Job* and *Socrates*, the Reason and Understanding, Will and Affections are duly (Man-like) *disposed* to consider and retain, and in the Prevalency of all those Powers attach'd with all *Fidelity*, to that fundamental Basis of all moral Truth



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and Virtue, viz. *That God is, and is a Rewarder,* &c. so as to form the whole Plan of *moral* Behaviour upon it, as well in the Prosperity, as Adversity of this dependent Life; the Substance, or rational Ground or *Confidence*, (as in the *Margin*) *Heb. xi. 1.* of such unseen Things heartily confided in, is *Faith*; and out of that Direction and Intention arises the whole *Concern* and *Obligation* of Morality which appertains to the Law or Religion of Nature. And therefore the Religion of Nature, *rightly understood*, infers the only true Religion of the *Mediator*, JESUS CHRIST, and establishes the written Revelation of that *Way, Truth and Life* in the Value, or in the Desires of all reasonable and unprejudiced Men, as the best and most perfect, as well as the *only Manner, HOW* God is a *Rewarder*, &c. with every thing else that follows from that Faith, being in all Wisdom, as well as Mercy, the *fittest* both to the pure spotless Nature of God, and the present conscious sinful State of Man. For if Natural Reason says, God is a *Rewarder*; and the Voice of Nature says, *he beareth not*, much less rewardeth, *Sinners*; and the Experience of Mankind confesses that *if we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us*; then there must be a *third* Person, thro' whose Hands the *Reward* is conferr'd: and, previously to that in order to preserve God whole in all his Attributes as he is infinitely worthy of them all, he must become, or must have been willing and qualified to be the righteous *Medium* of the Difference, for reconciling the punishing Justice, with the forgiving Mercy of God. And who is that but the *Mediator* I have been speaking of, and what is the Gospel but the *good News* of Remission of Sins, and eternal Life, in that Method?

NAY,

NAY, it infers Christianity in the great Article of the *Resurrection* of the BODY. For, if God is a *Rewarder* of Man, then Man doing his Duty in that Faith, will meet with a Reward worthy of God to confer. Now Sin, deriving its Source from the *Devil*, being, in his first State, an unnatural Thing (for that can never be natural which is the Abhorrence of our Nature) as well to Man, as to the Constitution of Things, occasion'd the Punishment, *Death*, the Separation of Soul and Body, the two constituent Parts; which Separation was to be sure unnatural to Man, and beside the original Design of his Maker. As the Sinner therefore transgresses in that *Body of Sin and Death* which is Partner to the Soul; if he is ever to be forgiven, and rewarded moreover, according to the Supposition, for diligently seeking God, then he must be recompens'd in *both* Parts of himself, which infers the Resurrection of his Body, wherein he both sinn'd, and serv'd God; and there can be nothing to hinder such a compleat re-instating Reward, but the Want of *Power* in the Rewarder; a Notion repugnant to Reason, and utterly unworthy of God. But God having not only pass'd the Sentence of Death, but inflicted it moreover, some Person must interpose as a *Saviour* from him, to take off that Sentence, and restore the Body to *Life and Immortality* also.

AND who is that but *Christ the Lord*? He, and he only is the Saviour of the *Body*, as well as of the Soul; and, tho' the Immortality of the Soul was every where talk'd of and believ'd in most Places, he was the *first* that brought

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brought that *new Thing*, the Life and Immortality of the BODY to light, by its *Resurrection*; which seems to be the true real Sense of *Gospel* Life and Immortality. And was not the first Man presently after the Sentence of Death, comforted with the *Promise* of this Redeemer? And it is very obvious to believe, that *Job* had the Tradition and Relish of this Promise upon his Mind for preserving his Integrity, in the Profession of his immoveable Faith, that he *knew* that his Redeemer liv'd, &c. Most certainly, God could never have been an *exceeding great Reward* to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, any otherwise than to their Faith and full Persuasion of the Resurrection of the *Dead*, *i. e.* of their *Body*; but must prove a very defective Rewarder, and might be asham'd to be call'd *their God*, if *that* was not accomplish'd; if that was not secured to them, he deserv'd not the Title of being *their God*, or so much as their constant Friend. For, if he assured and contracted himself to them *to be their God*, whilst living in the Body; they might, and did assure themselves that God changes not, and therefore, tho' their Bodies died, there must be an After-change in them, to make their Corruption live again, that they may be again reintegrated in their proper Persons, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and for ever enjoy the Consolation and Reward of their Travail, of God's being not the God of the Dead, but of the *Living*. Tho' there were a thousand domestick Proofs of his Love and Care, that he was *Abraham's God*, *Isaac's God*, and *Jacob's God*, yet where was the Evidence of his individual Love and Respect to the Compound of their Persons, if one half thereof was to lye always in the Grave? therefore *Abraham* being dead

dead, *Isaac* dead, *Jacob* dead, and so every CHAP.  
other diligent seeker of God, must all become XIX.  
*living*, and their Faith secures it to them. *The*  
*just shall live by this Faith*, and feed and support  
their present Life upon that pregnant Justice and  
Promise of God.

NOR can any thing less be a proper Reward for good Men, who diligently seek God, or worthy of him to confer. For tho' their Souls in a separate State may be as happy as God intended they should be without their Partner the Body, yet, as the Death of the Body is the certain Punishment of Sin; if that Punishment continues for ever, he would for ever reward and punish at the same Time; but that being inconsistent as well with the Divine Perfections, as the compleat Happiness of Man, there must be a Re-union of Body and Soul to Life and Immortality; that the *Man* may be compleated, and, released from all Effects of Death, and live, and be entire, and be immortal also. The Body being an essential Part of Man, according to God's original Composition of his Nature, the Salvation of *Man* can never be compleated but in the Resurrection of that Part of him. For, according to the Nature of Things, as the Separation of Soul and Body is with the greatest Reluctance; not an originally natural, but a superinduced, violent State; the Soul must be supposed to retain an ardent Desire of Re-union to its dear Mate and Partner, (better habited and conditioned) and that Desire, being reasonable, and as natural as the closing of a Wound in the Flesh, would be frustrated, and Man, the Delight of God, without a Resurrection of his Body, would remain unclothed, dis-junct, without-



without-himself, and beside-himself. So comfortable and agreeable to the Nature of Man and the true Constitution of things is the Religion of *Christ*, whilst it consults the Resurrection of the Body.

BUT, I wonder, how any modern *Deist* can look a Man in the Face, when, joining in a Rebellion against *Christ* and his Religion, he is in a direct Confederacy for robbing every Man he meets of one half of his Constitution, as far as in his Power, by *denying* the Resurrection of his Body; and at the same time seriously exposes (tho' under a Laugh of ridiculing the Contrary) the Ridiculousness of his own Faith and Sentiments, in running directly counter to the true Nature and Constitution of Things. For the *Deists* I have been arguing with, reject this Faith, and the *positive Distributions* of future Rewards and Punishments, which can only be explicitly known from Revelation, either who is the Judge, or what will be the Sentence; and so by rejecting the *positive* Obligations of Morality and Religion, they consequently subvert both the Law and Religion of Nature.

TAKE away those Rewards and Punishments, there will be neither Law nor Religion, and so in proportion as you diminish one, you lessen the Use and Operation of the other, and stop their good Effect for this World, as well as for the next. Whoever is in earnest persuaded, and not afraid of the Certainty of them, in general, either in a real, or affected State of Natural Religion, will ever be sincerely disposed to receive further Discoveries from Revelation as it offers, and be glad of an *opening*, for bringing their implicit, to the Light of that Faith, which

is

is explicit and particular in so affecting a Concern. For reveal'd Faith is not only the Strength and Stability, but the truest and best Explanation of Natural Faith ; unfolding and displaying as well the Knowledge of the true Nature of God and his Ways more and more perfectly, as the Knowledge of the Nature of Man and his Ways ; revealing the true Source of the Corruption of Human Nature, to the Truth not only of its Cure and Remedy, but of its highest Happiness and greatest Perfection. *YE BELIEVE IN GOD, BELIEVE ALSO IN ME.*

AND thus, I hope, I have not brought an unsupported, but a well grounded Accusation against *these Authors*, that they have both been guilty of *Misrepresenting*, as well Natural Religion, as Christianity.

AND that the Tendency of their Principles directly lead to *Atheism* ; and consequently that the Conduct of their Disciples without a timely Change, and Repentance, will inevitably conclude in it. And therefore it is hoped that they will at last see their dangerous Mistake, and candidly admit of *this Cure*.

P. S. IT has been disagreeable to my Temper, to bring a consequential Charge of *Atheism* against Persons *professing Theism*. But I shou'd have proved as unfair on the Side of Christianity and Truth, as they are partial and unjust against it, if I had not calmly and charitably laid the direct Tendency of their Principles before them, and supported it with convincing Arguments. If Natural Religion and Morality is the Spring-  
I
Head

CHAP. XIX. Head of all *true* Religion, and includes, by just Deduction of Reason, latent Christianity in it ; if true Natural Religion and Morality consist in a Connexion of the Understanding, Will, Affections, and Actions of Man to God, governing by Rewards and Punishments in a future State ; and if these Men poison Religion in *this Fountain*, they consequently take away all *true* Religion in its first Rise, and its after Revelation, in its Cause and in its Effect, which is the worst of *Atheism* under a disguis'd Name. For that is no Religion, which cannot truly please God, and will not benefit Man, in his after State. Their whole System, instead of retaining any Reasonableness, or Godliness in it, takes the Name of God, and Reason, *in vain*.

BUT without Faith that he is, and is a *Rewarder*, &c. it is impossible to please him, or to come to him by way of Religion. To believe merely with them that he is, does not constitute Religion, unless it is believed also that he is a *Rewarder*, &c. that begins and ties upon his Faculties, the Attachment of Man's Behaviour and continual Dependance upon God's Favour, his Divine Attributes, and his Providential Dispensations. And what is that when fully explain'd, but *ye believe in God, believe also in me* ? It is impossible to please God, or come to him without believing him a *Rewarder*, &c. Behold I come quickly ; and my REWARD is with ME, to give to every Man according as his Work shall be ? Rev. xxii. 12. So that a Door (Christ calls himself that *Door*) naturally and freely opens out of Natural Religion (as well as by Prescription out of *Judaism*) into Christianity ; the latter being a Commentary, Supplement, and Complement to

to the former : Shewing the only true Original of Sin and Error, how Men are naturally Slaves to that, and Error; and providing, at the same time, the only true Remedy for both. But they, who willfully bar the Door against Christianity, and shut up their Windows against its Light, prefer Darkness to Light, destroy all Religion both in the Text and in the Commentary, before God, and before Man.

J. CHRIST is so far from being a *Fable* according to the *Sarcasms* of the *Deists*, that Human Nature, and the Religion of Nature is rather the *Fable*, and *Jesus Christ* the MORAL of it. And as the *Inspiration of the Almighty* giveth Men Understanding; puts Wisdom in the inward Parts, and gives Understanding to the Heart; gives Wisdom to the Wise, and Knowledge to them that know Understanding; by corresponding, as they ought to God and Nature, in Virtue of the Faith natural to Human Reason, That he is the Rewarder, &c. So, all certain Divine Revelation, and true Scripture from Heaven, is, as it affirms, given by Inspiration, &c. for elucidating and revealing, for particularizing and catechizing from Faith to Faith that glorious *Primordium*, that *Punctum saliens* of all true Virtue; as the Mediator *Jesus Christ*, is the Life, and Circulation of that Life, when once formed within us by the Gospel, and the Resurrection, and the Life, to consummate it in Happiness everlasting. And let every modern *Deist*, who manifestly lacks that Wisdom, ask it of God, ask it honestly, seek him diligently in the Faith of Nature; and God will give it him liberally; and upbraid him not; and that Reason and Demonstration which he insists upon, i. e. *intrinsic Excellence*, will join with his



CHAP. his God in telling him, he has it in his Hands;  
 XIX. and in bidding him read it over again; if not  
 for the Penance of his Sins; at least for the Improvement of his Reason, and for shewing his better Respect to God, and to himself: making his humble Confession to God, and the World; That the Authority of God, and his *Holy Scriptures, or God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, is indeed Sacred and Divine; since it does so evidently appear, That they invest themselves with that Authority from *the Reason of Things*. And as the Kingdom of God, of Christ, of Heaven, is indeed thus founded in the truest *Reason within us*, inward Conviction, free Choice, and in order to that, publish'd in the Revelation; therefore it is said by the Founder, *the Kingdom of God is WITHIN US*; and by the Apostle, that Christ the *Word, is the Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, to the *Reason of Things*, which leads to that Kingdom of God in Christ. Which made Origen \* appeal to Celsus, *Whether it was not the Agreeableness of the Principles of Faith with the common Notions of Human Nature, which prevail'd most upon all candid and ingenuous Auditors of them?* Therefore the Sentence must needs be just, *he that believeth shall be saved*; and he that believeth not is condemn'd by the Law of Nature as well as Christ. But I hope, and pray, that timely Self-conviction may prevent future Condemnation, and lead them into everlasting Felicity. Where I would gladly lodge all People who read this Book, and to that *Amen* shall be the *Finis*.

\* Ἐν μὴ τὰ τὴ πίστεως ἡμῶν ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐρχήδεν συναγορεύοντα, μετατίθηται τὴς εὐγνωμόνης ἀλλοιότητος τῶν λεγομένων. Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. III. p. 139.

A N

# APPENDIX,

In ANSWER to a BOOK, Intituled,

THE

MORAL PHILOSOPHER:

OR, A

## DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A CHRISTIAN DEIST,

AND

A CHRISTIAN JEW.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the A U T H O R:

And Sold by W. INNYS and R. MANBY, at the West  
End of St. Paul's. MDCCXXXVII.

# APPENDIX

TO THE HISTORY OF THE

ARTS

AND MANUFACTURES

OF GREAT BRITAIN

IN 1794

BY J. H. P. J. J. J.

A CHRISTIAN HISTORY

AND

A CHRISTIAN HISTORY

OF THE

ARTS AND MANUFACTURES

OF GREAT BRITAIN

IN 1794



A N

# APPENDIX,

In Answer to a B O O K, intitled,

*The Moral Philosopher, &c.*

**W**HILE this Edition of the foregoing Sheets was pretty far advanc'd in the Press, there was publish'd a remarkable B O O K, entitled, *The Moral Philosopher*, in a Dialogue between *Philaethes*, a Christian Deist, and *Theophanes*, a Christian Jew. I agree with the ingenious Author, that the Matters therein consider'd and debated, are indeed of *the utmost Consequence* in Religion: but that the Arguments on both Sides are impartially represented, I can by no means agree with him, for Reasons that will appear afterwards.

I N most Sentiments, and in the Main of his Book, he is pleas'd to accord with the *Deists* I have lately consider'd; and so far he appears to be a real and most zealous Deist. This harmony of Opinion will be shewn presently. But as he



differs from Them in *some* Things, the Lovers of *Novelty*, in Religion, will doubtless be surpriz'd to meet with these following *New Things*, which are not, that I know of, to be met with in any modern Books of Deism. (1.) This *various* Author neither receiving the Christian Revelation in Whole, nor rejecting it in Whole, but by an assumed Prerogative above all others, admits and excludes, dainns and commends by Parts and Parcels, just as they favour or disagree with his New System: He seems to set up an Office of Curiosities and new Discoveries of many strange Things, with respect to what is, and is not certainly *interpolated* in that Revelation. \* He, I say, is so far a Philosopher, as to receive the Resurrection of the *Body* † into his Scheme, with future Rewards and Punishments, calling it ‡ the *Abrahamick* Religion. But I doubt, whether any sort of Deists, whilst they continue such, will approve of his Concession, or thank him for this Article of Belief. For, say they, we who are known to set up upon the Foot of believing nothing but what we thoroughly comprehend with our Reason, should we advance so far as to subscribe to that very odd Difficulty of Faith, as all our Ancestors, of dear Memory, have ever acknowledged (and every Philosopher for that Reason has smiled at, and dissented from it) with what Face can we any more appear to scruple the lesser Difficulties of Christianity, as explain'd by the most Rational, or forbore to be so by the Wisest? You believe too much, Mr. *Philalethes*, for an Orthodox Deist; and too little for a Sound Christian. Which of the Two will receive you into their Number, or make

\* Page 440.

† Page 348.

‡ Page 349.

their Acknowledgments for this Piece of Service, must be left to the Event.

HOWEVER this Philosopher ought to have justice done him as to these Particulars ; and I contend in the first Place among his Admirers, to appear with Pleasure, in giving him Thanks for the foresaid ingenuous Stipulations with the Christians, in the Cause of Religious Truth. He not only admits of future Rewards and Punishments in an indefinite Sense, but has the Grace beyond all Modern Deists to contend for them in an unusual Manner ; his Words are, “ It is certain that if God governs moral Agents “ at all, he must govern them by Hope and “ Fear, or by such a wise and suitable Application of Rewards and Punishments, as the “ different Circumstances of Persons, and the “ Ends of Government require. And these “ Rewards and Punishments must be such as “ are not the natural, necessary Consequences of “ the Actions themselves, since every one must “ see that this would be no Government at all, “ and that the Case in this Respect, must be “ the very same, whether we suppose any recto- “ ral Justice, or any Presence or Operation of “ God in the World or not. And yet this “ which is really no Government at all, is all “ the general Providence which some seem willing to allow.” \* And his Defence of the Use of *Prayer* from p. 179 to 197, against *Fatalism* and *Albeism* is very deserving of Commendation.

THESE hopeful Advances ought certainly to be cherish'd in any who calls himself a *Deist*,

\* Page 189, 190.

and not a little admired at from a *new* Oracle of that Profession. The Penetration and Compass of his Judgment appear indeed beyond the common Rate of Writers on that Side. He saw clearly the Absurdity of Fatalism and Atheism, and the equal, but yet common Folly of those who would skreen that Opinion under the Name of *Deist*. His love of Truth, at least the open Appearances of it, *Consistency*, made him abhor such Contradiction in Name, as well as detest the Scandal offer'd to himself retaining the Name of *Deist*: He has therefore very justly cut the Name out of the Catalogue of all the Tribes of that Denomination. But I hope as he is so far true to Reason as to enlarge his Faith with the foresaid Articles, that, by the Influence of his great Judgment, he may happily bring them into the Fold of Religion; and then I am loth to despair, nay willing to hope, that He at the Head of them, and all the other *Deists* will be so good to Themselves, and to the plain Consequence of Truth, as to proceed a few easy Steps further, and then they, and he, will be not only almost, but altogether such a true real Christian (inferior in degree) to St. *Paul*, a glorious Apostle, and the great Hero of this Writer. For as long as he makes those great Doctrines the Basis of his Scheme, which the other Chiefs either denied, or were perfectly indifferent to, he lays a *real* Foundation of God, and Moral Virtue, and at the same Time excommunicates every *Atheist* out of his Society, whom the other ever hitherto carefs'd as being *one* with them. So far as he pleads the Cause of God as a *Governor*, that he governs the Moral World by the Influences of those *Godly* Truths; I am ready to infer what he was going to say farther, and shall be allow'd

so

so to do by Himself: That if a Governor, he is questionless the most *perfect* of all Governors and Rulers over Men whatsoever, and that the *greatest Perfection* of Goodness, Mercy, Truth, and Justice must shine out in his Dispensations towards the Children of Men, for illustrating those several Perfections, and celebrating this Divine Governor; such as best consults the Nature and Circumstances of Man, for his good, as a free, moral, accountable Agent, but a frail Performer of his Duty always in this World; and at the same Time, most magnifies the Honour, and best marks out the engaging Excellence, and authoritative Amiability of all his governing Attributes jointly, and severally. If our Moral Philosopher admits this easy *Postulatum*, I hope he is the better disposed both to admit and consider better of the Plea for *Jesus Christ* in his several Offices.

My obscure unpracticed Pen, unskilful of every palliating Artifice, and incapable of adding Strength to any Thing but what down-right Truth affords, in common, to almost every Christian, has already attempted such a *Plea* in the *Mediatorial Scheme* as the only true Religion; and therefore am excused from repeating here. I recommended it with all Candour, and with a very good Intention, to the serious Thoughts of Deists, and at the same Time by way of Contrast, *delineated Deism* (which at *first* might have been a better *Title* of the Book) because a *true* Representation of it is indeed one way to cure it, without giving Offence to those, who, not loving the Name nor the Application of any Medicine, may be apt to distaste the kind Offer, however over-run with the Distemper they don't care to own, and have, on that Account, the greatest



need of a *Cure* ; but if it has its Operation in secret, in administering a better Opinion or Apprehension of *Christianity*, I have my Ends, yet perhaps by so great a Genius and Magisterial a Writer as our Author, it has yet been unseen, or unenquir'd after by him. I have the more Reason, I say, to hope for a candid Audience from him, because he is judicious and ingenuous enough to own \*, “ That the Means are *as necessary* as the “ End.” Now the good laudable End, or Religion of the End being Moral Righteousness and Obedience : I have evidently shewn throughout the preceding Sheets, that the Dispensation by *Jesus Christ* is *the best Means* in the World to that best End ; that they have an intimate, efficacious Connexion with it ; that if ever they are ineffectual upon Trial, it is altogether from a Misunderstanding, or Misapplication, through the Default of the User ; and if he intends the most congruous, by *congenerate* † Means, I have also shewn, and shall farther shew hereafter, that the *Positive, Instituted* Parts of Christianity are of that kind.

Now if the Resurrection of the Body is granted, and future Rewards, eternal Life, as the Gift of God confided in ‡, does not that import and point out *Jesus Christ* in more Aspects, and in an higher Station than Prophet or Teacher, or Deliverer of *Jews only* ||, viz. as our Lord, the *Kaiser* of the Dead, our *Judge*, whom we ought to honour ; our *Rewarder*, on whom we depend ; and if eternal Life so infinitely disproportioned to our short Stage of defective Virtue (as I have made appear, is the *Gift* of God, it

\* Page 420. † Page 419. ‡ Page 394. || Page 349.

must be so to the *Gentile*, as well as Jew, since all Men meet the Wages of Death to which it is opposed; still it is *thro'* Jesus Christ; and is connected to the *Belief* of his being *Son of God*, where-ever the *New Testament* is published, as well as to due Practice resulting from it. And therefore he is either more a Christian than he cares to own, or he does not really believe the Contents of those Doctrines, nor the *New Testament* concerning them, whence he has taken them. How much that diffusive National Belief of Mankind, *that God is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, comprehends of the Spirit and Principles of Christianity; See the Index of my Book, *Rewards*.

2. Another *Peculiarity* arrests the Wonder of the Reader, which is the new Dress of the Names, *Christian Jew*, and *Christian Deist*. One would imagine at first, it was owing to some *Jews* and *Deists* living in *Christendom*; but that affords him nothing of the Grounds of such a Denomination. Perhaps it is, because *Names* are sometimes given to put Persons in mind what they *should be*, if so, I hope they will both be converted in due time. But I rather take this fresh Instance to be a farther Confirmation of the Arbitrariness of imposing Names: It puts me in mind of the emphatical Name, *Keep the Faith* Barebones, in our late blessed and enlighten'd times, when inherent Characters were communicated with Names, and Saints infallible were stamp't unto their lives end, as soon as they came out of their Mothers Womb. But why he should deliberately call the Jew *Christian* for espousing, as appears by the Sequel of his Book, and, according to the Letter of the

the Scripture, adhering to the *Three* Offices and Characters of *Christ*, Prophet, Priest, and King, (I wish all Jews sincerely did so) and, with the same Deliberation, professedly calls himself a *Christian*, when he professes almost in every Page that he receives and minds *Jesus Christ* no farther than as he is a *Prophet*, or Teacher of moral Righteousness; whence this very odd unequal giving and assuming *that* Name in Whole, and in Part, and by one and the same Person; upon what Account, I say, can this strange Phænomenon be presented to the World by a Philosopher, unless it is to demonstrate to it, that he is contented with Two Third Parts less of current Christianity than the other, and that he is nevertheless full as good, nay, believe him who can, the better Christian of the two?

Is it not a little strange and particular, that he should pretend the Letter of Scripture to support his Attachment to one *Third* of the Christian Doctrine, and yet refuse the other *Two* with disdain, when the same literal Sense is as obviously plain and frequent in maintaining one as well as the other? If Figure and Allegory must be called in for interpreting and spiriting away one sort of Office and Character, why is it not applicable to all Three? And then Christ vanishes clear off the Stage; but to keep him at one Corner of it, and, to serve a turn, not suffer him to appear in real, full Character, but confine and degrade him to one of his illustrious Appearances only, is dealing very unjustly, and ungratefully by the best Friend and Benefactor to Mankind. This is opening and shutting Holy Scripture with a Key of his own inventing, of more Art and Dexterity, than the *Pope* ever pretended

pretended to have in his Custody, for making it signify not what it really signifies, but what he pleases to permit it to mean. Is this interpreting or perverting, understanding or confounding, receiving or rejecting those Writings? With like Consistency, and full as much Truth, he might have called himself an *Heathen* Christian, an *Infidel* Orthodox Believer in Christ, or some total Piece of a Thing.

WE have heard of *four* Species of Deists, and every one of them refutable from that Creed of Nature, that *God is a Rewarder*, &c. as I have shewn in my last *Chap.* but he allowing and appealing to that *Principle*, sets up for a *fifth* Species, wiser, as he imagines, than all the rest. But did not the Heathens almost in general retain that Belief? Wherein then is he wiser? Is it in embracing the Resurrection of the Body; and eternal Life as the Gift of God? but both of these he borrows from those Scriptures he ungratefully abuses, and would betray to the other. So that his assum'd Name *Christian*, advances him no farther than a Heathen, (I wish he was but half so honest and true to Discoveries and Improvements of moral Truth, as was *Socrates*) saving his Belief of the Resurrection of the Body, supposing he believes that real Resurrection, which the Heathen Philosophers unanimously rejected, whilst the *Easterns* from all Antiquity held, and to this Day hold a *Transmigration* from Body to Body, and in that Sense, a Life everlasting; but that is so far from being an Advantage to his Cause, that it is the Mill-stone that will sink it: For to embrace a greater seeming Difficulty, and, at the same time, to reject and run away frightened at seemingly



ingly less in the same Revelation, and those as plainly, if not more frequently expressed, betrays a Spirit of Perverseness, Singularity, and Inconsistency, the reverse of *real* free Thinking, impartial Reasoning, and Inquiry.

IF he alledges that his Zeal for Morality, and his Consideration of the Nature and Reason of Things, determines him to this Partiality, and to that filching and mangling of Scripture, I must have leave to reply, having already made out at large, that the *whole* Mediatorial Scheme of the above *three Offices*, is founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, as well as in Scripture; and, upon this last recommending the Thing to the common Understanding of Man, is found as derivable from one, as from the other: And seeing the whole and sole Design of the *positive, peculiar, instituted* Parts of it, at which he is so furiously angry without Cause, is really devoted (as I have made appear) in the greatest Propriety and divine Fitness for assisting and advancing Morality to the highest Perfection of Performance that Human Nature is capable of; I may be allowed to observe, especially since he has advanced nothing to the contrary but his own strong Asseverations, destitute of Proof, That had he a little more Knowledge with his Zeal, or a little better considered the Nature and Reason of moral Things, or Fitness of Things in their Connexion and Tendencies, he had probably been of another Mind, and never have lost his time in writing new Inconsistencies, or repeating old Absurdities.

3. THE Reader without any Item given him, must necessarily observe, and be surpriz'd with a

*Nota*

*New Specimen of Writing in the Moral and Philosophic Kind.* When new Things are offer'd, or old stale ones retail'd to the candid Reader, it is usual to express some Diffidence, or offer at some Apology; but this is so very much in the *Thrafonical* Mood and Figure, tho' upon the most serious and important Subject in all the World, viz. what is the only true Religion, or, in other Words, what is the only true Christianity, that it can't escape being observed as remarkably heterogenous to the Subject. After heaping up a vast Multitude of gracious Names upon his Adversaries and their Tenets, for 450 Pages together (who are in truth, not the Clergy only, but the most Pious, the most Learned, the most Honourable of every Denomination of *Protestant* Christendom, and thither I suppose he would confine the Debate) such as *Judaism, Superstition, Enthusiasm, Ignorance, &c. &c.* And after throwing out some singular Darts of his Spleen against the Clergy of that, and every Distinction with all his Spite, with the utmost of his slaying Force, allowing their well weighed and long tried *Protestant* Reasoning upon Jesus Christ and his holy saving Religion, with respect to his being a Propitiation for our Sins, and a Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for reconciling God to Man, as well as Man to God, no better Quarter than *Raving*\*, I can answer for myself, and may venture to do so for the rest of my Brethren (if I might have the Honour to speak for them) that we are ready to turn the other Cheek, and take a fresh Rap of his Reproach, sooner than return opprobrious Language, or any one of his base, low-

\* Page 215.

bred, virulent Epithets, *Entusiastick Pulpiteers, Theologasters, System Mongers, Superstitious, Ignorant, Impostors, Cheats, Hypocrites*; that the clerical Religion is a *Thimble and Button, or Powder le Pimp*\*; to oblige a Man in *Preaching* to talk *Sense*, would be the most unreasonable Nonsense†; that the Belief or Use of the *instituted Means, positive Parts or Doctrines* of Christianity, is the *Clerical or Sacerdotal* Christianity or reveal'd Religion‡; and in this instituted, political Religion of the Hierarchy, there is no Distinction of Clergy, or, they are scarcely distinguishable§, with much more of the like abusive Strain which adorns our *Moral Philosopher*, in his immoral profligate Libel against them, and real Christianity.

PRAY, Brother Christian, as you love to call yourself; why so very destitute of Temper, Meekness, and Moderation; the very Spirit and Ornament of that Religion you pretend to? Does the *Wrath of Man indeed work the Righteousness of God*? Is that your way of reading our Text? You give out “no Doubt but many  
“ large elaborate Volumes will be written, and  
“ a thousand Sermons preach'd against this your  
“ Book, in which my Adversaries, (they are your own Words) “ especially the Judaizing  
“ Part of the Clergy (by whom you mean all who retain the Notion of Jesus Christ being an Atonement, Sacrifice, Propitiation for Sins, or the Mediator of Redemption, and Intercession for Mankind) “ will clearly and triumphantly  
“ confute all that I have said, without answering

\* Page 95. † Page 119. ‡ Page 117. § Page 94.

“ any

“ any one Objection.” \* But it is you, Sir, who write in the *triumphant* Style, and perhaps in bravado Terms, not to be met with out of the Precincts of the *Bear-garden* ; the Learned there, best know whether it is according to the Laws of Heroism to challenge *Ravers* and Madmen, such as pretend to confute a Man without answering any one Objection, or beat him soundly without giving one blow ; and yet in the very next Page you say, “ You should rejoice to see such Adversaries (that can cope with you) among the Hierarchal Men, or Judaising Part of the Clergy ; and if God will spare my Life ’till he has rais’d them up, I should desire in this World no greater Blessing.” How much this is the menacing Elocution of the Gentry of the same Place, I leave others to say, and give their Opinion likewise, whether even the Bravest there are apt to brag the most, or who they are that generally come off with the worst : It is already decided against himself, if I may be permitted the Words of our mighty *Goliath*, “ You may easily perceive, that our greatest Talkers, and most *positive* Deciders, never think at all.” † It is well (whilst I put the Negative upon myself) if some little *David* of the Despised Clergy does not compleatly demolish this vain Conqueror, and by the same Assistance, and for the same Reason, because he defies the Divine Scheme and Apparatus of the living God reconciling the World to himself by *Jesus Christ*.

BUT I forget myself, a new set up Oracle has the Privilege of dictating and being be-

\* Page 357.

† Page 356.



lieved upon his own Word, as if Christianity  
 was to stand or fall by what he says *pro* or *con*,  
 and can have no other Chance to be this, or that,  
 or t'other, but just as his Authority, against all  
 other Authority, interprets and determines. To-  
 wards the Conclusion, he triumphantly foretells  
 and pronounces out of his infallible Chair, the  
 Spread of Deism \*, and echoes to, and will  
 make good, as far as he is able, *Theophanes's*  
 Observations in the Beginning. " Had this  
 " Malady of *Deism* only infected our Rakes and  
 " pretty Fellows, Men of little Sense and less  
 " Virtue, it would not have much affected  
 " me; but the Sore lies deeper, and the Ma-  
 " lignity seems to spread itself thro' the whole  
 " Body, among Persons of all Ranks, Qua-  
 " lities, and Characters, " &c. † But while he  
 is labouring his pernicious Point to overthrow  
 the Holy Scriptures, the Oracles of the living  
 God, he is supporting the Truth of them by  
 fulfilling what they have foretold, That in the  
 latter Day, there should come Scoffers, denying  
 the Lord that bought them. Still I trust in  
 God, and the common Reason of his Readers,  
 that they will not be so complaisant as to give  
 up their Senses, together with the common ob-  
 vious way of understanding all Writings, for  
 the Sake of the strange, violent, whimsical, in-  
 consistent Meaning he would impose upon them;  
 especially, since the literal obvious Sense which  
 he detests and runs away from, is shewn against  
 all his Fallacies, to be perfectly consistent with  
 the greatest Honour of God, and Good of  
 Men, and the Moral Truth and Reason of  
 Things.

\* Page 434.

† Page 14.

I, who have lived much in the Country, and so far from *London*, and Opportunity of seeing New Books, must own myself a Stranger to other Writings of this extraordinary Pen, and therefore can't tell whether this positive magisterial Method is his usual, Constitutional way of Writing upon every Subject; if so, he seems to be resolved upon engrossing Infallibility to himself, and allowing no Body whatsoever to be in the Right, who has the Misfortune to differ from him in Opinion, in any thing. But he is inconsistent with himself in shewing so much Arrogance, and absolute Contempt of his Adversaries in the *Body* of his Book, and yet in his *Preface*, putting on some Modesty and Respect to other Persons Judgment; as these are two very different Appearances of the same Person, I am willing to look upon the most favourable, and believe, that his prefix'd love of Truth, will at length prevail over him to relax from his Positiveness, and relinquish that Peremptoriness, which he can, to be sure, ill bear in other Writers; and dispose him to submit willingly to be overcome with the Revenge of calm Reasoning, and sound Argument, without aiming at the vaineſt of all Vanities, I mean, the common Stage Prize, *the Honour of the last Word*: Unhappy Disgrace of Controversy, and instructive Debate about Truth, arising from any unpersuadable Litigant dealing in many Words! for towards his Conclusion, he appears to be of that very Temper by the Obstinacy of his Style, “ That the Point can never be  
“ settled, nor the religious Peace of Mankind  
“ ever establish'd upon a rational Foundation,  
“ as long as the Necessity or Fundamentality

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“ of such mere positive Laws and Institutes  
 “ shall be allow’d at all.”\* This seems to be  
 a determined Resolution to banish Christianity  
 (as far as his Pen can contribute to it) out of  
 the World, with its three great, divine, holy In-  
 stitutes, which are so positively appointed, *Bap-  
 tism*, the *Lord’s Supper*, and the Worship of God  
*thru’ the Mediator Jesus Christ*, its peculiar Glory  
 and Distinction, to the greatest Honour of God,  
 and to the highest Benefit and Comfort of Men,  
 let *who will* offer to protect, or make any Apolo-  
 gy for it: nay, notwithstanding those *Positives*  
 appear to all *other* reasonable Men to be pur-  
 posely calculated and ordain’d from Heaven as the  
 best Means in the World for improving in, and  
 carrying on the Moral Law of Righteousness to  
 the highest Human Perfection; and that they  
 have a rational, moral Connexion with, and a real  
 efficacious Tendency to that End, as Experience  
 testifies, where-ever there are any real serious  
 Christians to be found; and consequently wor-  
 thy both of the Name, and of an universal Re-  
 ception, as a *Reasonable Service*, the most desira-  
 ble, perpetual, and only true Religion that can  
 be propounded to the World, by degrees, or  
 settled at last firmly in it: yet to him *solely* it  
 shall appear, by himself *singly* it shall be ac-  
 counted as the Reverse, be construed, be mis-  
 represented and traduced, as having no such  
 tendency, *Pag.* 177, and throughout his Book.  
 But tho’ he appears resolutely and inflexibly  
 bent upon his inglorious Point against common  
 Conviction, and the clearest and strongest Ar-  
 gument to the contrary, still I hope he will at  
 length, relent of this Temper, and rather than

put out the Eyes of every body for seeing differently from himself, begin to think there must be some Fault in his own.

THESE are *some* of the *Nostrums* of our great Religion-Mender; more might be mention'd, had I compass for it in this Place. He is in perfect Harmony with the two Oracles of Deism I have confuted, in exploding and ridiculing *Miracles* \* as any Proof of Religion coming from God; that *Prophecy* is as little to be given in for Evidence of Doctrines †; that they are no more than fortunate, human Conjectures, a kind of Fortune-telling supported upon Trick and Cunning for selfish Views ‡.

HE agrees with them in disallowing any well attested Revelation, whilst he is somewhat singular (unless you will range him with the *Quakers*) in requiring it to be *Personal* to every Man ||, whilst every Reader will be ready to do justice, in affirming that this Author is not peculiar, but of one Heart and the same Soul with the rest of his Brethren, in laboriously repeating and repeating, printing and reprinting the same confuted Stuff, without taking the least Notice of *any* Answer. What sort of a Cause that is, and with how much Honour and Ingenuity the Defenders of it abound, must be left to the Publick. I may venture to commend, or rather blame him, for his Masterly Skill in the *Socinian* Subtleties: but where is the Glory or Sense of playing that *hocus pocus* Game over-

\* Page 81, 92, 3, 28, 411. † Page 333. ‡ Page 165, 289, 305. || Page 89.



again? For there will be the full Belief and a full Confidence in the reality of Motion, be the Arguments never so subtle or seemingly convincing against it; so, be there never so many *Figures*, *Allegories*, &c. lurking in the Fingers of the *Socinians*, to spirit away the Common Sense of so many, so very many plain Words, and Sentences, and Paragraphs of Revelation, which disagree with, and are not well-affected to their Scheme; still there will be Common Sense, and Apprehension of Words left in great abundance to stand ground, and not be baffled out of one's Senses by such refined Absurdities. I am afraid therefore, that whoever goes about to add to the Subtlety of our Author's Head, will, at the same time, take away a great deal from the Integrity of his Heart, which he should not thank any body for.

BUT so it is, I am sorry to observe, for the sake of so ingenious a Person, what can't escape general Observation, That much the greatest Part of this elaborate Work consists of, and swells itself up with those egregious *Repetitions*, baffled Attacks, stale, dissipated Objections; and, I must add further, tho' the chief Merit of it appears to be of that sort, I can't do him the Pleasure of answering him in particular as to those Matters, for two good Reasons: because I have already pretty largely, and very lately, answered his Accomplices in the same way of Thinking, and Reasoning; and because a much greater Person than himself, the *Publick*, might justly be displeased with the repetition of Arguments unanswer'd, and wholly declined by this famous Antagonist, tho' they enter into the very Heart of the Cause he espouses. However  
I shall

I shall endeavour to gratify him with all that is needful, or can be thought proper, in this present Reply, by addressing myself to what new Strength, he may think, he has added to old Arguments, or the greater Light of seeming Truth, he supposes, he has projected upon, and recommended his beloved Subject under : and this I shall do where-ever he advances any thing, which I judge does directly appertain unto, or immediately affect the Merits of the Cause in debate.

IT is obvious to every cursory Reader, that he is Hand in Glove with the Two celebrated Authors I have answered, in making the Christian Revelation to be neither more nor less than the *Republication* of the Law of Nature ; in maintaining, that *Jesus Christ* died only as a *Martyr, Witness, or Example* ; that the *Positive instituted* Parts of the Religion called Christians, are senseless wretched Things, having not the least rational Use, Fitness, or Moral Tendency in them ; fit for nothing but to be exploded as Nonsense, and cashier'd as Priestcraft. And he is so closely link'd with them in his Affection to the *Clergy*, that he can't find Words bad enough for them. But as there happens to be some new Turn now and then in the Process of his Assertions, or something observably bright or smart in the Management of his Argument, or Elucidation of his Point, he might think himself neglected, if I did not likewise take some Notice of his Club or Share in the pious Design that has been so long in hand.

IN consequence of professing himself a *Christian* Deist, he declares, " I must therefore

“ take Christianity, as to the Substance and  
 “ doctrinal Parts of it, to be a Revival of the  
 “ Religion of Nature.” \* He had declared for  
*Jesus Christ* before †, and through his Book  
 owns him in no other Character but that of a  
*Prophet*, or what is necessarily included there-  
 in ; as he proclaims every where, that he died  
 only as a Martyr, and Witness to Truth, Ex-  
 ample of Moral Righteousness, he particularly  
 adds, “ That all that was done or suffered by  
 “ him was necessary to *himself*, and upon his  
 “ *own Account*.” ‡ “ That the Sufferings and  
 “ Death of Christ, as a propitiatory Sacrifice for  
 “ Sin, is not as the *meritorious Cause*, but as the  
 “ *moral effective Means* of our Salvation and  
 “ Recovery, &c.” || This is his figurative  
 allegorical Sacrifice, Propitiation, &c. and all  
 other Sense is absurd Raving not Reasoning :  
 and elsewhere, speaking the Sense of such Chri-  
 stians as himself, “ That the Death of Christ,  
 “ as an Atonement or Propitiation in the pro-  
 “ per Sense is absurd, impossible, and contrary  
 “ to the Nature of God, to the Nature of  
 “ Man, and to the necessary Reason, and Mo-  
 “ ral Fitness of Things.” \*\* And frequently  
 loads the commonly receiv’d Christian Scheme,  
 as the Dregs of Judaism ††, Enthusiasm and  
 Superstition. That the Christians (whom he  
 therefore every where brands by the Name of  
*Judaizing Christians*) learn’d the Trick and  
 Cheat of Propitiation, Atonement, Sacrifice,  
 from the *Jewish Priests*, who learnt it from the  
*Egyptians*. To quote Passages relating to this  
 last, would be in Effect to cite half his Book.

\* Page 392.

† Page 358.

‡ Page 153, 4.

|| Page 228.

\*\* Page 95.

†† Page 200.

At last he triumphantly concludes with respect to  
 “ the Doctrine of Christ’s Satisfaction, or the  
 “ Necessity of his Death, as a Propitiation for  
 “ Sin; and the principal Ground of our Accep-  
 “ tance with God, he has said enough to subvert  
 “ and destroy this Hypothesis, under *all the Ap-  
 “ pearances and Constructions* of it, among the  
 “ several Schematists and Faith Mangers \*.”

But if *Example* is all the *saving* Virtue of  
 Christ dying for the Sins of *the World*, What a  
 miserable short Scheme of Salvation and Redemp-  
 tion is this? Every Mother’s Son of the many  
 past, present, or future Generations of Men who  
 have, do, or shall not learn and copy this saluti-  
 ferous Example, are lost and undone; Sincerity  
 in doing their best to please God in the Circum-  
 stances they are placed under, can stand them  
 in no stead. Is this stingy Representation of  
 God’s Wisdom, Goodness, and Love of the  
 World, reasoning rightly upon either of them,  
 or depreciating and reproaching all and every of  
 them in a shameful Manner? The Deistical Pro-  
 jects of Salvation used to be more liberal to the  
 Goodness of God at least; What is the Meaning  
 then of this sudden Alteration, for the worse,  
 in our present Projector? Though nothing can  
 be plainer from innumerable Places that he means  
 nothing by the Death of Christ, but as an Ex-  
 ample, Martyr or Witness to the Truth, yet,  
 excluding all other Benefits of his Death and  
 Passion, he has the Assurance to insult and de-  
 ride the rich Favour and superabounding Love  
 of God to Mankind, in that Dispensation of Je-  
 sus Christ, in whom we have Redemption through



his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace; his Explanation of which Words are, “In or by whom, *i. e.* by Jesus Christ, in consequence of his perfect Obedience unto Death, we are *redeem’d or delivered* from the Dominion and Condemnation of Sin, “by the rich Favour and superabounding Love of God, as manifested to Mankind by his Son Christ in the Gospel \*.” And to make it the more impossible for any *other* Benefit to derive upon Mankind, he asserts very roundly, “That all that was done or suffered by him was “necessary to himself; and upon his *own Account* †.” In defiance of the Scripture Account, which never once intimates that he died for himself, or on his own Account; but always, and every where expresses it, that he died *for us, the Just for the Unjust, &c.* by way of *Atonement, Propitiation, &c.*

IN order to contravene this commonly received Doctrine, and undermine the general Hope and Faith of Christians, he proceeds by two Methods, *first*, by changing and resolving the literal Meaning of Scriptural Expressions into a figurative foreign Sense: *Secondly*, by offering at some Reasons, such as they are.

I. HE maintains that *Propitiation, Atonement, Purchase, Ransom, Price of Redemption, &c.* are all figurative Expressions, Metaphors, and Allegories ‡. But surely all Mankind must allow in all serious Writings, that the literal Sense is the most obvious, and the first that presents, and ought

\* Page 123, 124.

† Page 153, 154.

‡ Page

161, 229. and other Places.

therefore

therefore constantly to be receiv'd and maintain'd in Interpretation as true and undoubted, unless very good Reasons appear to the contrary, such as are allowed by all wise Men to decide between, and give the Preference to the *Letter*, or the *Figure*. But in such Writings the former always keeps its Place of the latter, unless there is some Contradiction implied to the Attributes of God, natural or moral; to the eternal Distinction of Good and Evil; or the Nature of Things: If nothing of this is the Case (and that it is not the Case, will be seen under the Head of his *Reasons*) then the literal Sense is intitled to an universal Reception, not only because of its first common *presumptive* Right of being the true Design of the Writer, but because, in equity also, there is no exception as to its being disagreeable to any other Truth.

WITH respect to this unfair *Socinian* Liberty of interpreting Scripture, the Words of that great Reasoner Archbishop *Tillotson*, are remarkable, “ There is no end of Wit and Fancy, “ which can turn any thing any way, and can “ make whatever they please to be the Meaning “ of any *Book*, though never so contrary to the “ plain Design of it, and to that Sense, which “ at the first Hearing and reading of it, is “ obvious to every Man’s common Sense\*.” He had before call’d it violent, strained, wonderful and incredible, and adds presently after, “ That no Doctrine whatsoever can have “ any Foundation in any Book, if this Liberty “ [of Figure and Allegory] be allowed.

\* *Tillotson’s Works*, Folio, Vol. I. Page 421.

Is it not a very hard Case with Scripture? That this Author, who by his assumed Privilege of *double Intender* in interpreting the Old Testament\*, can readily make any thing of Scripture, and as he affirms the *literal* Sense absurd, and the allegorical the only rational one†; and as the famous Author of the *Grounds*, &c. on the contrary affirms, the allegorical *figurative* Interpretation to be the absurd Sense; both these Evidences (deep Reasoners as they would be esteemed) agree in one common Design, 'tis true, against Christianity, but then the *Witnesses* should agree a little better together, and not contradict one another, before any Credit should be given to either of them. But as this *singular* Evidence against it, neither shews Wit, nor Consistency, in bungling and jumbling the literal Fact and Metaphor together, *those Quakers* must be allowed to outstrip him in both, who carry the Metaphor *throughout*, making both the Death and Resurrection of Christ to be no more than *allegorical*. He is very liberal with his dignifying Appellation *Enthusiast*, upon those Christians who embrace the literal Sense, but he ought to consider, whether the general distinguish'd Characteristick of an Enthusiast from a sober Thinker, is not taken from his Affectation and Addictedness in turning the plain literal Sense of Divine Scripture into Figure and Allegory; not being contented to be acted by Religion, and submit to the plain Meaning of Words, but he must needs actuate Religion, and impose a new Sense, that he may strike out a new Religion; how far this fits our Author is left to others to give their Opinion.

\* Page 249.

† Page 157.

BESIDES it is literally true and plain, that if the Sentiment of Christ dying as a *Martyr* to the Truth of his Doctrine, or the *figurative* Evasion of his dying a Sacrifice, Propitiation and Atonement had obtain'd in the apostolical Times, how could it be truly alledged with regard to *Jew* and *Greek*; that his Death was a stumbling Block to one, and foolishness to the other?

II. HE offers at some Reasons in support of his Opinion, which I might proceed to consider with respect to what he says, that the Death of Christ as an Atonement or Propitiation, in the proper Sense “ is absurd, impossible, and contrary to the Nature of God, to the Nature of Man, and to the necessary Reason, and moral Fiteness of Things.” But I may be excused from answering in this Place, having so copiously done it in the two preceding Volumes. Wherein is shewn the most perfect Harmony between Rectoral Justice and Mercy, and all the Divine Attributes and Perfections; how much they are all adorned, illustrated, and recommended to the Love, Fear, and Adoration of Mankind; where it appears, that Remission of the Penalty upon sufficient Satisfaction (if he will have it called so) is an Act of Justice, in a different and truer Sense than he represents\*, it being the Performance of a *Promise* to those who embrace the Covenant, and claim the *Justice* of Promise, without any need of mentioning *Equivalents*, and, at the same time, though in a different Respect, is an Act of *Grace*, by preferring that Method of

\* Page 148, 149.

forgiving,



forgiving, which is most *favourable* to the Sinner : How admirably also Human Nature is consulted in its lapsed, peccant Condition, its Repentance and Devotion effectually relieved and comforted in its guilty Fears, and every Thing restor'd, better'd, and exalted by that wonderful Dispensation. Consequently, if so entirely suitable to the Nature of God, and Man, it must of Course be so to the Reason, and moral Fitness of Things.

I. ONE Reason he *particularly* gives in against the received Doctrine and current Sense of Scripture is, because *Merit* and *Demerit* can't be communicated ; and consequently there can be no such thing as *redundant Merit*, *imputed Righteousness*, *vicarious Obedience*, or *meritorious Cause* of Man's Redemption. However common and agreeable to the Usage of Human Governments, is the Communication both of Merit, and Demerit, with respect to the *Heads* of Families, who have deserved well or ill of the Publick and its supreme Governor ; and how much soever the Communication of the latter may be called in Question, as impeaching the Justice of God, and narrowing and pinching upon his Goodness ; still as his Goodness rejoices over his Justice, and loves to impart its compassionate Regards to our Race, as far as can consist with the Honour of his Laws, and the Dignity of his Government, why should that glorious Attribute, on which we so much depend, be stinted of its holy and wise Overtures, or be debar'd and block'd up by our Author from its reviving Communications that way, to the unspeakable Damage and Discomfort of the World ? Is he possessed with any Melancholy  
that

that disposes him to revile and disparage the Divine Grace, and envy the Good of Mankind? For the Thing is uncontestably certain, felt and confess'd by the Experience of all Men, the Heathens themselves, that we do not, cannot, with all our Care in our present lapsed State, exactly and fully perform the Law of Righteousness written on our Hearts; and if it is no less certain, That that Law, and the Honour of God exact that Obedience from us, and upon the Failure subject us to Condemnation. Had there never been so much as *one* partaking of Human Nature, to perform this adequate Obedience, and fulfil all Righteousness, then that Law must necessarily be broken by every Body, and at all times, and *not one* Son of Man found to perform and do that compleat Righteousness, which he is conscious is his bounden Duty; and God must stand by and see himself dishonoured and disobeyed *universally*, and his holy Law contaminated and trod under Foot by *every* Person upon Earth without *Exception*. But this horrid Imputation upon the Holiness of the Divine Governor is saved and prevented, if one mighty to save interposes in *our Nature*, descends upon our Earth, and undertakes the obliging Task of performing, not what Man is capable of performing in common Human Sincerity, balanc'd, as it must always be, with the Frailty of Human Condition, and the violent Strength of Temptation occasionally besetting it; but what the Agent very well knows in his Conscience, he *cannot* discharge with all his Care, and with all his Sincerity added to that; in that Circumstance too well known to be denied, is it not a Divine and Heroick Kindness in the Son of God, to offer his own perfect Obedience in our Stead; and no less gracious in God

the Father to accept it, in Commiseration of the unfortunate State of the Descendants of the first Adam?

THERE is therefore a Necessity of admitting vicarious Obedience, imputed Righteousness, Communication of Merit, meritorious Cause; which may be done with all Honour and Justice, and without any Injury to any Party concerned, Governor or governed, in order to balance, explain, and moderate the Necessity of an adequate unfinning Obedience due from Man; of which, through Misfortune, not personally his own Mismanagement, he does not, cannot acquit himself of, alone. It must consequently be as agreeable to *moral Truth and Rectitude*, that there should be redundant Merit\* for supplying *that way*, what Man is incompetent for, as that it should ever be so, for God to require such Obedience, or, in the Course of Divine Providence, that it should become impracticable for Man to conform to it. How reasonable then in Divine Goodness and Mercy, and upon that Account, credible to Belief is it, That the *second* Adam should much more exceed in Advantages and adventitious Favours to the Human Race, than the first had it in his Power to incommode or postpone us with respect to the Favour of his, and our Maker.

2. ANOTHER Reason why he is so much set against the common Opinion of Propitiation, and Atonement is, because, as he imagines, it is "Supporting Iniquity with Grace †," or as he elsewhere in more Places than one ‡, expresses

\* Page 9. † Page. 170. ‡ Page 146.

himself, because such a Doctrine is “ a strong  
 “ Hold for Sin and Satan.” But this is a gross  
 Mistake of his own; if not a wilful perverting  
 of the Faith. Is it not very strange, that the  
 strong Expressions of St. *Paul* in this, and the  
 foregoing Article, should not be able to set him  
 to rights, especially since he shews so much de-  
 ference to him, in particular, as to esteem him  
 “ a better Casuist and Expounder of the Doc-  
 “ trines of Christ, and of the true Nature,  
 “ Genius, and Design of Christianity, than all  
 “ the rest put together \*?” Yet it is notorious,  
 that he puts *the God forbid* upon any such sub-  
 versive Inference, or Supposition of that Kind.  
 If any Christians flatter themselves with the  
 Hopes of Salvation upon easier Terms than they  
 ought; or indeed upon any Terms short of the  
 End and Design of Christianity, teaching them  
 to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and live*  
*soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World,*  
 they are certainly mistaken and misinform’d. For  
 the Christian Repentance and Pardon is no man-  
 ner of Encouragement to Sin; nothing can be  
 plainer than that Pardon is declared, and Satis-  
 faction made for *repented Sins*, and no other,  
 (though he insinuates the contrary †) and that  
 supposes time for perfecting the begun Repen-  
 tance. He allows the “ good Effect of Repen-  
 “ tance, is to lessen the Number of Mens Sins,  
 “ and encrease the Weight and Value of their  
 “ good Actions in the Day of Account ‡.”  
 Now what is the Use of *Faith in our Lord Jesus*  
*Christ*, but to hasten and perfect our *Repentance*  
*towards God*? With respect to *Repentance*, (I  
 might add also *Prayers*, both of them being the

\* Page 331. † Page 149. ‡ Page 275.



*natural* Religion of the *Means* for performing the Law of Nature, the Religion of the End) he says, “all Revelation must suppose Reason, and “be founded in it, and cannot make any thing, “fit, and reasonable, that was not so before\*.” Now the Christian Revelation supposes this Duty fit and reasonable, the very Voice and Law of God, Nature, and Reason, yet in Commiseration, that it was dead and perish’d out of the World, the Revelation of *Jesus Christ* presents itself to the World lying in Wickedness, in Aid of that Duty, for the better quickening and enlivening it, not to connive at any Sin, but to forsake every kind universally, with all haste and hatred; if the Knowledge, or rather some *Assurance* of God’s Readiness to forgive after infinite Provocations from Man, is necessary to his Repentance, and if God’s Method of assuring the World of that, by the Death of Christ, has a moral Tendency and an influential Power, not only for raising up Repentance from the Dead, but for animating it with Vigour, and pushing that Vigour on to Production of goodly Fruits mete for it, it must be confessed that the *Knowledge* of *Jesus Christ* suffering and dying for penitent Sinners, is the greatest Service that can be done to Repentance, as well as the most inestimable Blessing to that part of Mankind, to whom it is revealed. It cannot therefore be an indifferent thing to this Duty, nor to Man, whether *Christ* had suffered or not, as this Author supposes †; seeing it is in itself, in the proper and grateful Reflections made thereupon, efficacious in promoting the same. Not necessary in order to enable God, as he falsely argues,

\* Page 212.

† Page 149.

to pardon Sin, but necessary, because it *became* him to forgive it in that manner, and that only. Nor is that way of remitting Sins any manner of Support of Unrighteousness, or the least Privilege to Iniquity; because Obedience to the moral Law of Righteousness, is not superseded, but advanced, nor is there any Pardon by Christ to any wilful Sinner as long as he continues such. Every Christian's personal Righteousness is as necessary to join Christ's Righteousness in doing what he can, as the Righteousness of Christ is to join his for supplying what he cannot, in order to a Fulfilment of the Law, for our Justification before God: That Righteousness of his is therefore by way of Transfer to the diligent Seekers of God, and Followers of the *Holy Jesus*, called *our* Righteousness, and to all that join or use their own best Endeavours, he is a complete Redeemer; but to those who refuse them, wheresoever dispersed, whether they know Christ, or whether they never heard of him, he is no Saviour at all.

IT is surprizing that this accute Author should actually suffer his own Scheme to lie under the real Imputation of being a *strong Hold for Sin and Satan*, whilst he falsely lays it at the Door of common Christianity\*. He maintains, that “this  
 “ general Pardon, Act of Grace, or Indemnity  
 “ for all past Sins, was never intended to be ex-  
 “ tended farther (confined to the Sins commit-  
 “ ted under either the *Jewish* or the *Pagan*  
 “ State †,) so as to take in all, *or any* wilful  
 “ presumptuous Sins committed under the Gos-  
 “ pel Dispensation itself, after Men had sworn

\* Page 170.

† Page 172.

“ themselves to Christ, by Baptism or publick  
 “ Profession, and thereby engaged themselves  
 “ in the Christian Covenant,” and this he would  
 endeavour to support from *Heb.* vi. 4, 5, 6. x. 26.  
 both which Places are understood by all the best  
 Interpreters of Apostacy from the *Faith*, as well  
 as Practice of Christianity. But this dismal,  
 disconsolate, unnatural System of his in allowing,  
 with some Hereticks of old, no Repentance *af-*  
*ter* Baptism, necessarily drives Men to *Despair*, and  
 that to be sure is not only a Sin, but *the* strong  
 Hold of Sin and Satan: This is a dreadful Blast  
 of his, not God’s Displeasure against lapsed,  
 compassionate Human Nature. I have heard  
 from him of *Jewish* Christianity, and *Deistical*  
 Christianity, but this is the most horrible Christia-  
 nity of all, it is so cruel and inhuman, and  
 yet it is his own new Christianity, fresh wrought  
 out of his own Brains. What must become  
 of frail, unconstant Human Nature at this  
 rate, sincerely beginning its Repentance, and  
 sincerely striving against its Sins, the perfect  
 Mastery of which is a Work of Time, and  
 the good Effect of Habit in Virtue, which, by  
 Degrees only, inures to Constancy in Duty?  
 Is there no return to Duty after a Relapse, so in-  
 cident to fresh Beginners in a virtuous Course,  
 nor any Recovery or Hope of Reconciliation  
 after a Presumptuous Sin? I thought the Hazard  
 of such Sins was, not absolute Despair, but as  
 the *Psalmist* describes, *lest they get the Dominion*  
*over me.*

GROTIUS, Hamond, Stillingfleet, may con-  
 sequently be in the right, and their System not  
 compacted of Iron and Clay, as he falsely al-  
 ledges,

ledges\*, but seems to have its Parts regularly called, and intimately united together; since they equally consult (what must be be equally provided for in any true System of Religion) the Honour of God, and the Frailty of Man, and harmonies to both of them, in the most surprising Manner: Whilst his new invented one having little or no regard to either, must appear to the present Generation, and Posterity, (if it reaches so far,) the greatest Botch and Bungle, and Discord within itself, and Discouragement to all who serve God, that ever was offer'd to the World, because it tends in every Christian Country to overwhelm every Sinner with Despair, instead of recovering him from the Error of his Ways. Are you, Mr. *Moral Philosopher*, that perfect Man, as to need no Repentance? — It does not appear that you are, because you so little observe the Decorum, and so very much neglect the Characteristick of *such* a Person in bridling your publick Tongue, your Pen, no better than you do. But what is stranger, in your Philosopher's Prayer†, there is no asking Pardon for Sin, nor confessing himself an actual Sinner, but *if I should err from the Way of Truth*; and though you make him profess his Dependance upon God, you are ungrateful in shutting out all Thanksgiving from his Devotions for Mercies received; and it might better have become a moral Philosopher, so well acquainted with Revelation, and the Origin of Evil (not denied in other Places‡,) to have acknowledged the Depravity of Human Nature more explicitly. So that in lieu of bringing a true Accusation against those great Men “*that*

\* Page 158.

† Page 426.

‡ Page 231, 2.



“they don’t think at all,” you have bestow’d wretched Self-accusing Pains upon yourself, in giving the World a Demonstration how void of Thought is the Compiler of your Book, and of Truth the Composition. And what a pitiful inconsistent Declaration do you draw up against the vanishing and almost vanish’d rigid *Calvinists*, when at the same time you acknowledge they are better than their Principles, and are not influenc’d by them in Practice \*?

3. ANOTHER particular Reason why the Death of Christ, as a propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, is not a meritorious Cause is, because it is a “moral effective Means of our Salvation and Recovery” as above cited. A very short Answer may suffice to this, because it will better fall under the Consideration of Means afterwards. I am glad in the mean time that our Author admits the Death of Christ to be a moral and effectual Means of Salvation, in any Sense. All the Difference betwixt him and me is, which is most effectual, and consequently the most moral Means, his Notion of *Example singly*, or the common laudable Opinion, by way of *grateful Remembrance*, what he has suffered upon our Account in Propitiation to his and our Father (not in Satisfaction to Himself, as he grossly misrepresents †) join’d to his Divine Example. The moral Efficacy of this last I acknowledge, and must believe it will be confess’d by others also to be as inferior to, and defective of Virtue and moral Efficacy in respect to the other, as a Part is to the Whole.

\* Page 218.

† Page 159.

4. A fourth Reason for our Author's singular Opinion is, "That St. *Paul* always by "*Works*, or the *Works of the Law*, means the external Ritual, and carnal Institutions of the *Mosaick Law*, whenever he excludes them from any Share or Concern in the Business of Salvation and Justification before God,"\* which supposes, agreeably to his System, that the Works of the *Moral Law* might be, and are sufficient, of themselves, for Justification before God. But nothing can well be plainer from that Apostle's writings (which he pleasantly magnifies in order to nothing else seemingly, but almost every where to contradict his great Patron in Christianity with the superior Authority of his own greater *self*) than that the *Gentile* is concluded under Sin, as well as the *Jew*, that one was as much subject to Condemnation, and guilty of Sin with respect to the Law that he was under, as the other; that neither of them could be counted Righteous before God by the Observance of the Law they were respectively subject to; not the *Gentile* by the Moral Law; nor yet the *Jew* by his Ritual Law added to that; and comprehensively as well of the *Gentiles* as of the *Jews*, and of the Law of those, as much as of these according to the Tenor of his Arguments, and the Design of his Writings upon that Subject, his Conclusion holds good, that by the Works of the Law *no Flesh* can be justified, or in the Words of the *Psalms*, in his Sight *no Man living*. That God is the *Justifier both of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision*, and by one and

\* Page 406.

the same Method, as it follows, and that is by *Faith*; that Justification consists in *Remission of Sins*, or which is the same thing in other Words, *not imputing them*. That the Remission of Sins was the *very end* of Christ's Blood being shed; that both *Jew and Gentile* are *justified by his Blood*, and *have Peace made for them by the Blood of his Cross*. These, with other equivalent Expressions, are such known Maxims and Characteristicks of the Gospel laid down and contended for by this Apostle, as the Religion of the Means for carrying on Repentance and Devotion toward God, for sober, righteous, and godly living, that they occur to every Reader. *Abraham* was justified, and had his Sins remitted, by an active Faith in God's *Promise*, believing in *Him* of his Seed who should come after, in whom all Nations of the Earth were to be *blessed*, have their Sins forgiven, or not imputed. *Socrates* seeking God, panting after Revelation, and doing his best to please him, may be justified, and his Transgressions cover'd by the Blood of his *unknown Redeemer*; but it is to be fear'd, our *Modern Moral Philosopher* runs great hazard of being condemn'd by that *Lord and Judge*, in whose Name, and through whose Blood Remission of Sins and eternal Life are only given, declar'd, and granted of God in the Letter and plain Meaning of those Scriptures in his hands? for his spurning, notwithstanding all *real Sacrifice*, intelligible Propitiation; obvious Atonement in the shedding thereof; and for his embracing, and teaching nothing more than the *Exemplar* of it, expunging every thing else, and thereby endeavouring to pervert, degrade, and supersede the common Faith in Christ as a *true*

Saviour, Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for the World ; bringing him even down to the Level of *Socrates*, and making him a Friend to Mankind in no higher Degree above him, than in being a more perfect Example in performing the Moral Law of Righteousness with greater exactness.

5. ANOTHER main Reason of his wild Opinion, excentrick both to Reason and Scripture, is, the Process at the Day of Judgment, “ *That God in the last Day will reward every* “ *Man according to his Works, or according to the* “ *Deeds done in the Body, whether they have been* “ *morally good or well.*” \* This Concession that God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation and Age, he that feareth him and worketh Righteousness shall be accepted of him, whether he has lived under the Gospel or not, he makes the Basis of his Debate ; and “ the “ great Rule of Judgment which God will proceed upon *with all* Mankind in the last Days, “ he constitutes a certain infallible Criterion, “ whereby to distinguish between Superstition “ and Religion, or which is the same Thing, “ between true and false Religion.” † But it is not, neither can it be any Question, Whether the Religion of the End, the Moral Law, or Religion of Nature, is true Religion or not, all are agreed in it ; the sole Doubt, the whole Debate and Subject of Inquiry is therefore concerning the Religion of the *Means*, which is the True and the False, and how, and wherein one differs from the other. Now the Criterion of that, can only be taken from the *Tendency*, or *Repug-*

\* Page 146.

† Page 198.



nancy of the Means in Question, for promoting or hindering the other. Why the final Judgment proceeds upon the Religion of the End, see the *Index* of my Book *Judgment*. I have shewn that Proceeding does not supersede, but supposes the Religion of the Means, seeing the *Head* of all of the Means is then the *Judge*, and the Judge also of the Knowledge and Revelation of them all the World over. But what signifies erecting a Tribunal upon the Means, when the End is unaccomplish'd by the Knowledge of them? That would be only encreasing Damnation which is deep enough without it; but for not receiving the Means, the *Belief of Himself* including in it all the rest, where offered, and as he offers to Belief, in order to that End, the same Judge we know elsewhere, awards Damnation; where the End happens to be performed by some few, without the explicit Knowledge of the best Means, diligently seeking to please God in their Opportunities, and with the Sincerity of their Hearts, there to omit mention of the Means, is to add to the Glory of the Performer; so that it seems superfluous either way to bring them to Account. The Means are supposed to have so great a Love to the End (to be sure the Head of the Means overflows with it) that it is generously above their Notice, where, and whenever the End is found to be pursued and practised; and equally beneath their Notice, when it is not. But is it not very remarkable, that seeing our Author makes the whole *Means*, and all the *Virtue* of Christ to consist in his *Example*, that That neither should ever be mentioned at the last Day. What then does he gain by these Negative kind of Arguments? It makes just as much

much against him, as for him. If it is a *Moral Good or Evil* to be brought to Account, for following or not following his Example, it certainly is so for not receiving him in other Respects, and both upon the same equal Footing, of being literally and plainly set forth in Holy Scripture. But I am sorry to see after all, our confident Author, so considerable a Moral Philosopher, as he appears in his own Eyes, to be afraid of his real Judge at the Last Day, as to conceal and secrete him : For he makes *God himself* to be the Judge at that Day,\* whereas it is notorious to all that ever heard of the Gospel, that *Christ* will then be Judge, and that all Judgment is committed to him : and I pray God, that his Book under Consideration, may not be one of his *Works*, for which he shall be called to account.

6. OUR learned Author has another specific Reason for his special Determination of the Case, and that is because Sacrifice, Atonement, Propitiation, is all *Cheat*, and *Imposture*, *Priestcraft*, and *Judaism*, to produce all that might be collated upon this Head, would be the same Thing as to cite one Quarter at least of his Book. This is certainly going to the Bottom of Matters, and blowing up all Revelation at once, provided his Authority, his new-coin'd never-heard-of History, and contradictory Reasoning, may be admitted into Creeds and Articles against all Authority, all true History, and all solid Reasoning to the contrary. His general Outcry is, that the Jewish Sacrifices are an astonishing Institution, a Mystery of Priest-

\* Page 439.

craft ; that Propitiation, Atonement, was all a Trick and Cheat of Priests\*, a gross Imposition upon the Common Sense and Understandings of the People†, that the *Israelites*, both Prophets and Priests were *Egyptianiz'd* ‡, imbibed false Principles from *Egypt*, and the People retain'd the constitutional Character of that Priestly enslaved Nation§. That the Origin of *Sacrifice* was from Priestcraft there, and likewise of *Miracles* \*\*. That the *Israelites* took all Opportunity of revolting to Idolatry, by reason their national establish'd Worship was so prodigiously Expensive, and their Clergy, or Priests, and Levites, such absolute Masters of their Property ††, that *Joseph* was the first that made the Priesthood independent, and hereditary, and enslaved the Nation ‡‡.

As to this last falsity there is such an effectual Confutation in the *Weekly Miscellany*, † that he might have been asham'd to repeat it in a Book come out since, and take no Notice of the solid Arguments produced against it ; with respect to the rest, it is all imaginary, repugnant to all History, and unsupported by any Thing but his own confident Affirmation, or, as this Deponent, living so many thousand Years after, farther saith upon his own Knowledge. We see with what intent this Author receives, and compliments Revelation, in order to deride and mock it, just as our Saviour was formerly acknowledged a King for no other Purpose. But if a few of the many Inconsistencies of this Evidence

\* Page 127.

‡ Page 255, 6.

†† Page 239.

Paper.

† Page 156.

\*\* Page 238, 241.

‡ See *December* 4, 1736, and a preceding

‡ Page 257, 254.

†† Page 129.

are attended to, every Body will be ready to contemn, instead of Hearing it out.

I. HE makes Sacrifices the Invention of the *Priests* in *Egypt*, yet owns \* the first Sacrifices were offer'd, as they certainly were, by Fathers and Heads of Families, who have the chief Care of the Prosperity of those under them. We may observe by the Way, a very good Reason from the Origin of Things, why *Sovereigns* succeeding to the Paternal Government should copy that Pattern, be the Head of the Church, and have the Supreme Care and Controul in Religion. And if the Acceptableness of the Sacrifice consists, as he says † in the Dearness and Value of it to the Owner or Offerer, how came Heads of Families to be willing to part with their *best Things* in order to recommend themselves to Heaven, if there was not a previous Signification and Command from thence for Sacrifice of some kind, and then the Choice of the best of that kind followed of itself? I have shewn in the preceding Book, how very improbable, nay morally impossible it is that Sacrifice should be an human Institution. But if the Acceptableness is to be derived from a Submission to Divine Authority, as an Acknowledgment of the Right of commanding, and the Duty of obeying, this makes it of Divine Institution, and brings Revelation along with it; for how can a Divine Command be known without Revelation? Or if the atoning, reconciling Virtue must arise as he suggests partly from the Command of God, partly from the Value and Dearness of the Thing to the Owner, what can more enhance the Excellency of the Sacrifice of *Christ*?

\* Page 235.

† Page 210.



2. HE sufficiently accuses the Priests and Clergy of understanding their own Interest; whilst he deposes against them, “ That they made themselves the only authorized Mediators between the People and God\* ;” but is it not strange, how it should ever come into their Heads, to part with that beneficial Office; or to forge a Revelation that takes it out of their Hands, and sets up *Christ alone* in that Office and Dignity? Or how came the Protestant Part of them, to resign an opulent flourishing Dominion over Conscience for the Sake of Truth, and comparative Poverty, and, by an uncontrouled Licence of the Age, of being vilified and run down in the open Market-Place, in Print, notwithstanding. Are these Accusations or Encomiums?

3. HE says without one Word of Proof, the *Jews* revolted so much to Idolatry because of the Expence of the public Worship, and the great Gains the Clergy got by it: But the Record insinuates quite another Reason, and that was the Gratification of their lascivious Appetites religiously pamper’d in the Idolatrous Worship of their Neighbours.

4. THOUGH the Law of *Moses* admitted no Pardon of Sin, as pertaining to Conscience in their Sacrifices, but only of Sins and Transgressions of the Law of their Constitution; is it not a polite Demand, and a pleasant Kind of Challenge to any of the Clergy †, (as if any would be so ill at Leisure as to humour him in such a whimsical Proposal) to prove and make out

\* Page 243.

† Page 127.

from the *Jewish* Accounts of Sacrifice, that the Life of the Sacrifice was vicarious for the Offender; whether they were in Possession of such an Opinion in Virtue of those Statutes and Ordinances, or whether it did not derive from more ancient Time; when he has over and over declared the *Jewish* Sacrifices to be all *Cheat*, learnt in, and brought with them out of *Egypt*; to what purpose is it to appeal to an arrant Imposture for finding out Truth? He can never be concluded by Evidence he has already cashier'd, and excepted against. Besides, he has another Evasion ready, if he should be pinch'd at any Time with respect to any *Institution*, or *positive* of Revelation, viz. that the Thing is *interpolated*. For he in effect affirms, whatever is not moral therein is interpolated\*.

5. He represents Christianity as a political Faction among the *Jews*, that Christ as the Saviour of the *World*, was the Gospel of *St. Paul* only, and not the Gospel of *Peter*, *James*, and *John* †, who confin'd Salvation to the *Jews* only, or Proselytes to them: Yet *St. John* declares openly in the Face of this Author, *whoever* believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life ‡, and that he is the Propitiation not for our Sins only, but also for the Sins of the *whole World* §; and *St. Peter* pronounces God to be no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation, he that feareth him and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him §. That there is none other Name under Heaven given *among Men whereby we must be saved* †. Which Salva-

\* Page 440.

† Page 354.

‡ III. 15.

|| 1 *John* ii. 2.

§ *Acts* x. 34.

† *Acts* iv. 12.

tion and eternal Life this Author with amazing Assurance and Uncharitableness confines to the *Jews only*, as if the Messiah was *Jesus and Christ*, Saviour and Deliverer to them *exclusively*, and in no other Sense, but as Restorer of the Kingdom to *Israel*, and to the House of *David* \*.

BUT not to tire the Reader with Inconsistencies and false Reasoning upon this Head, I proceed to the

II. HIS *Second* Impeachment against common Christianity. This respects the *positives* or *instituted* Parts, as Means to an End. The End we are both happily agreed in, *viz.* moral Righteousness. But he traduces and excommunicates the *Christian* Means *Baptism* and the *Lord's-Supper* (he ought to have included Worship of God *through the Mediator*, inasmuch as the other are the Initiation into, and continual Sustenance of this) upon two Accounts. 1. Because of the great *Discord* of Opinion among Christians with respect to them. 2. Because they are not *congenerate* in his Language (I suppose he means congruous) Means to that End.

1. THEY are not to be endured, because there is such a vast diversity of Opinion concerning them. This he repeats with Satisfaction at the Beginning of his Book, and with triumph at the End of it. He argues the chief Ground for rejecting the peculiar, nay, the most important and concerning Doctrines of Revelation, is the Variety and Contrariety of Sentiments about them; that consequently none of

\* Page 349.

the Doctrines of Revelation [as distinguished from Deism] can be fundamental or necessary \*. Again, to this Day there are not any two Sects, or Parties, who can agree about any one System, or Scheme, of what they call positive instituted Religion. “ I challenge all or any of them to  
 “ name me any one single Point of Inspiration,  
 “ or mere Revelation, in which they are agreed,  
 “ or which they do not differently understand  
 “ and interpret as much as any two different  
 “ and contrary Doctrines in the World †.” But if this is a good Argument, it proves too much, and consequently nothing at all, at least peculiarly against the positive Parts of Christianity. If they are to be condemned merely upon this Account, the like Diversity of Opinion will rise up in Judgment against his own dear Religion, the Religion of Nature. Have there not actually been as many (perhaps more, two hundred and eighty are reckon’d up) Divisions and Subdivisions of Opinion concerning the *Summum Bonum* among Philosophers, as there are Divisions among Christians. Is there therefore no Truth, nothing fundamental or necessary neither in the End, nor the Means? They both administer to different Opinions (though not equally different) and both are occasion’d one and the same Way; by either adding to, or leaving out more or less Ideas than really belong to it; or perhaps for want of that easy Observation of the Religion of the End, and the Religion of the Means, which heals the Breaches, recovers Misunderstandings, and makes a perfect Reconciliation. Is the Fault in the Revelation, or the Readers, in their Judgment or their Passions, their Capacity for sound

\* Page 15, 16, 17.

† Page 442, 443.

Knowledge,



Knowledge, or their pre-conceiv'd Notions and warping Prejudices?

As to his Challenge of naming any one single Point of Inspiration, or mere Revelation, wherein they are agreed. I fancy I can name him two. One is the Prophecy, That there shall be *false Teachers, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them* \*. They are sufficiently agreed in the Truth of that, by unhappy Experience. Another thing of mere Revelation they are united and agreed in is, That *Jesus Christ the Mediator* between God and Man, is Son of God, and Son of Man. Had Christians been so prudent as to have rested in that inspired Definition, or general Declaration of that most complete Mediator of Redemption, and Intercession for the Salvation of the World, what Rivers of Ink, and Blood might have been saved for better Uses!

2. The second Ground of his Indignation and outrageous ill Treatment of *Positives* is, because they are not *congenerate* Means for carrying on and improving moral Righteousness (I presume he intendeds by that Expression congruous, apt, or well fitted for that purpose). With respect to these, he openly declares, “ he receives [Matters of Revelation] upon the natural Reasons “ and Fitness of the Things themselves, and not “ upon Testimony at all †.” That “ there is “ one, and but one certain and infallible Mark, “ or Criterion of Divine Truth, or of any Doctrine as coming from God, which we are “ obliged to comply with as a Matter of Re-

\* 2 Pet. ii. 1.

† Page 84.

“ligion and Conscience: And that is the moral  
 “Truth, Reason or Fitness of the Thing itself\*,”  
 he elsewhere dogmatically pronounces that  
 “there is nothing of that Sort, no manner of Con-  
 “nexion between these Means and that End.  
 “That every positive Law, of what Nature or  
 “Kind soever, must be just and right, suppo-  
 “sing it to be a Command from God, (speak-  
 “ing of that to *Abraham* for sacrificing *Isaac*)  
 “how unreasonable or unfit soever it might ap-  
 “pear to our weak, imperfect, and limited Un-  
 “derstandings: But then the Question is, how  
 “God should command any such Things, or  
 “what Proof could be given of it if he did †.”  
 If therefore any of those *Positives* presents itself  
 in a different View, it is insufferable. “And if  
 “there are any positive Laws in Religion, it  
 “must consist in keeping close to the original  
 “Institution ‡.” This positive Writer, it seems,  
 has not the least Charity, not one civil or respect-  
 ful Word, nor any the least Regard for these  
 positive, instituted, solemn Parts of Christianity,  
 but discards them utterly in general and particu-  
 lar, as having no moral Reason, Fitness or Con-  
 gruity in them, or any of them; but, what is  
 still worse, all this Declamation is publish’d to the  
 World, without producing any thing like Argu-  
 ment, unless railing Assertions, naked of good  
 Reason, can be supposed to pass for such with any  
 Lover of Truth. Now though I have already  
 shewn, at large, in the *Mediatorial Scheme*, the  
 intimate Connexion, particular Aptness, and  
 exact Fitness of those Means, to the End we are  
 both agreed in, or, in other Words, the internal  
 Evidence, or moral Truth of those *Positives*,

\* Page 85, 86.

† Page 134.

‡ Page 110.

since Revelation has discover'd and applied them to the Religion of the End ; and, I may farther add from him, that (if small Things may be compared to great) a *New Scheme* of End and Means, Principle and Consequence, Cause and Effect, is open'd to the Mind of Man, like a Sir *Isaac Newton's Principia*, or *Euclid's Elements*, tho' certain Truths before, were never discover'd before \*, I am nevertheless ready to correspond to this learned Author in further Manifesting the utter Invalidity of his few wretched inconsistent Reasons to the contrary. As where he says, " The Religion of the End differs in nothing, " from the Religion of the Means, but as the " Habit is different from its necessary, corre- " lative Acts, which mutually and reciprocally " strengthen, confirm, and improve each other, " and therefore the Means in Religion have as " clear and necessary a Relation to the End, as " any natural Means can have to their proper " End †." He before describes the Religion of the End, " as consisting in moral Truth and " Righteousness considered as an inward Charac- " ter, Temper, Disposition or Habit in the " Mind ;" and after says, " as all Religion lies " in the right Knowledge of God and ourselves, " in acting agreeably to the Relations we stand " to one another, &c. it is plain, that the " great Source and Fountain of all this must be " *Attention*, Contemplation, or a close Appli- " cation of the Mind to moral Truth, Reason, " and Fitness of Things. This is the first Spring " and Origin of all moral Virtue and Religion, " and true Happiness ‡."

\* Page 144.

† Page 416.

‡ Page 416, 417.

IN answer ; I may alledge, that though God has the same Right that a Father or Master has of giving Commands, and yet of not giving the Reasons of them to their Children, or Servants, still so much better is he than a common Father or Master, that it has pleased his Divine Wisdom, to lay the Obligation of his positive Commands and Institutions in the real Nature, moral Truth and Fitness of Things, as well as in the Authority of his own Commandment, that the Mind of Man may have a perpetual Evidence without any Error or Deception, that God has indeed commanded the Thing ; whence follows, according to our Author's *Criterion*, our necessity (without begging of Questions) of obeying and submitting thereto, as a Matter of Religion and Conscience. How can Deists themselves refuse to receive and comply with them, if they have any Conscience or sincere Respect to the Religion of the End, when it so evidently appears to them, that these Positives are so far from being mechanical Means of Salvation, as they formerly misapprehended or misrepresented them, that their very Tendency and Design is, to work and perfect moral Righteousness more and more, by a moral, rational Operation ?

FOR, indeed, they are Divine Means, the very best appointed in the World (I might call them *congenerate*) to the Attention of the Mind, whereby, and upon that Occasion to improve and strengthen itself in its Duty, and Proficiency in all moral Righteousness more and more, consulting the Temper, and cultivating that Character it ought to be possessed of, for securing the Favour of God, or letting its Light shine be-



fore Men. *Attention* is as it were the Stomach of the Mind and inward Man, and therefore must have *some Thing* to digest, to feed and recruit the Life of God in Man. Now if this same Attention is neither starv'd nor diverted, but verily and indeed occupied to the full, as well as agreeably affected; and all the Faculties, Understanding, Will, and Affections attract their Nourishment and receive their Health and Vigour in Holiness and Righteousness from the due Use of these *Positives*; and the outward and visible Signs in the Two Sacraments are purposely instituted as *Symbols* to the Attention of the Mind, bestowing its solemn Attendance upon those holy Means for those holy Ends: Then the Use and Value of those Divine Means to our human Needs remain uncontestable by any, even by our Author himself; especially if, in the next Place, I can prove them according to his own *Criterion*, to be *congenerate* Means, *viz.* the best adapted in the World, for the End of advancing in all Righteousness, to higher Degrees, and greater Constancy. Then there may be a real efficacious Connexion between these Means and that End, notwithstanding he peremptorily denies upon no Grounds at all, that there is any Connexion at all; then they may indeed be acknowledged fit and right, and continued with all safety, by all reasonable Men as rational, moral Means, notwithstanding, and in contempt of his not only fallible, but false, scandalous, innumerable Asseverations of being *absurd*, &c. Then, by his Leave, in Virtue of his own Concession, if they have moral Truth and Fitness in them, they may be *instituted* of God, and appear worthy of him by his own way of proving and admitting any Thing to come from Him.

S U R E

SURE he does not mean his *congenerate* in that Sense *ex grano fit acervus*, because that would bring up his Account of Means of Grace to be *Mechanical*, which he justly abhors in Religion: Besides in *material* Ends and Means, it is known to Dealers in Physick, that *Antigenerate* Means are sometimes more serviceable for producing the desired End, as in the Maladies proceeding from the Extremes of *Alcalies* and *Acids*: These, I apprehend, are not *congenerate* Means yet he is pleased to affirm in his positive Manner, as above cited, “ that the Means in Religion “ have as clear and necessary a Relation to the “ End, as *any* natural Means have to their proper natural End.” But if all natural Means are not *congenerate* to their End, why must all religious Ones be so to their End? To pass by little Slips, I must proceed to believe that if he intended by *congenerate* Means, *similar* to the End, such as Acts are to Habits, there can neither be Truth in the Supposition, nor Propriety in the Expression. Because *Attention* which he makes to be the Means, “ or the great Source “ and Fountain, first Spring and Origin of all “ moral Virtue and Religion and true Happiness,” is not a religious Act of the Mind as *such*, but its *Disposition* or *Capacity* receptive of those Occasions, Opportunities, or Means in Life, which are by its Care and Application convertible to those Acts of moral Righteousness, which inure into Habit, Temper, and Character; if the Mind bestows its Attention altogether, or unseasonably, or more than is right upon secular Things, it accordingly and proportionably contracts an Habit, or Character *that way*: But either way there must be Objects for the Attention

tion to fix upon, as the Means of performing those Acts which Repetition consummates into Habits, whether in Religion, or in other Affairs. To put therefore the best Construction that can be put upon our acute Authors meaning in the Term *congenerate* as coupled with Means, I conclude that it is equivalent to *congruous, fit, proper, apt* to produce the End they are designed to effect.

I now proceed to prove against him that the *three Positives* of Christianity are all and singularly invested with those Characteristicks, possess'd of these good Qualities, and endear'd, if due Attention is given to their Reason and moral Fitness, to the Interest of Mankind, and the constant Usage of Christians.

I. As to the Worship of God *thro' the Mediator Jesus Christ*, He says, as above, "that all Religion lies in the right Knowledge of God, and Ourselves," and elsewhere, "That *Self-acquaintance* is the first necessary to Divine Science or moral Philosophy." Now as the Revelation of the New Testament is founded in the *truest* Knowledge of God and Man, is there any Thing under the Copes of Heaven so well adapted, or so fully provided, as its great Discovery of *Christ Jesus*, the *Sent of God*, the *Son of God*, and of *Man*, the adequate complete Mediator between both, full of Grace and Truth, for displaying and confirming the Knowledge of God, the Holiness and Righteousness of his unspotted Nature; and for opening the Cause and discovering the Source of the conscious guiltiness and frailty of degenerated human Nature, what was its Lapse and Fall, and what is its Cure and Remedy; one

Knowledge calleth to the other Knowledge, but there is none sufficient to answer, or to offer at a Compromise, or any competent to make a perfect Reconciliation, but the sole all-perfect Mediator of our Profession. Our Author is so envious and spitefully bent against this glorious Hope of the Christian Calling, that he would defeat it wholly by misrepresenting it, affirming, That Christians “ don’t worship the Father at all, “ while all their real Veneration, Love, and “ Obedience are paid to the *Son*\*.” But I have before so copiously treated of the admirable Benefits, &c. of this Mediator, that I shall be in danger of Repetition in proceeding further. I would only be permitted to observe, in brief, in opposition to his truthless Assertion, that this positive, commanded, instituted Part of Christianity, is a singular good, congenerate Means, *i. e.* most excellently suited and adapted to the moral Powers of Man for production of moral Righteousness in Plenty, not only from solemn occasional Application, but in the daily Usage of our Lives, in the Address of our Christian Devotions.

FOR does not this daily keep open the delightful Avenue for our view of God and our Access to him without repulse? As it wings our drooping Prayers, so it sweetens and daily secures Repentance for Sins of daily incursion, ’till we get the perfect Mastery over them; for we have no Licence to make use of his *Name* but upon our Repentance; and to that we are urged and almost unavoidably led upon thinking of his Name, *i. e.* as oft as we think of our *Prayers*. The fallible

\* Page 153.



*Understanding* is daily kept in its proper Sphere, free from the Excesses and Inquietudes, the Despair or Presumption that arises from faulty Knowledge of God, or Ourselves. The stubborn *Will* is daily curbed, disciplined in right Choice, advised by its best Friend, and animated in the pursuit of its Happiness, and of the Ways of pleasing God by daily striving to relinquish all love and liking to Sin, and daily advancing in Virtue and Holiness of living: For why should not every Christian be so true to his Name and his Discipleship, as to learn from him to die to and forsake his Sins daily, seeing Christ purposely died on Earth that we might forsake them, and siteth at the Right Hand of God to intercede for our Pardon, and crown us with Life and all Blessedness, when we apply in his Name for the same? The various *Affections*, upon mention of *Christ* and *Hopes of Glory* in him, are daily summoned up to Heaven to Things above, to attend that Life which is hid with Christ in God, and to loosen their Embraces, and Attachment to Things on Earth.

2. IF we consider *Baptism*, he himself owns *Engagement in the Christian Covenant* \*, and his own allow'd Sense of the primitive Baptismal Creed †, both conspire to declare and argue it *not to be* a *Mechanical* Means of Faith and Religion, but rather a Rational Moral one; and so serves to confute himself, and save me the Trouble, when he every where else, according to the Tenor of his Book, arraigns this and the other positive instituted Parts of the Christian Religion, as no other than *Mechanical*

\* Page 172.

† Page 395, 396.

*Means of Grace*, and no better than *absurd nonsensical Things*; and, because Baptism, and Bread and Wine, were in the World before, and sometimes used by the *Jews* upon particular Occasions, he amuses his Reader with a pleasant kind of Argument, that Christ *instituted* neither of them, tho' he expressly commanded, and peremptorily requires the Application of them to his Religion, constitutive as they are, with peculiar Additions of the most solemn Parts of it; and is not that a sufficient, intelligible Sense of *being instituted* by him? What tho' no *Moral Character* was annex'd by the *Jews* in the solemn (not daily, cursory) Use of either of them, the denying of which without Proof, is a poor way of begging the Question? Does it follow in the Christian Application of each, when one Thing is made a Sign or Symbol of another, external Visibles of internal Spiritual better Things, that therefore there is no *Moral Character* required to be connected to, nor *inward spiritual Relation* design'd to be begun, or kept up in the Use thereof? More especially seeing *moral* religious Words, importing Engagements and Relation to the Father, as *one God*, to the Son as *Mediator and Prophet*, to the Holy Ghost, as *Sanctifier, Aider, Supporter and Director* are, by his Confession \*, annex'd to Christian Baptism, and if annex'd, must be to this Purpose, and carry that Importance; and he can as little deny, but that *morally* religious Words, *Do this in Remembrance of me; this is my Blood of the New Covenant which is shed, &c.* are expressly incorporated into, and go along with the Lord's Supper.

IF Baptism imports *Covenant*, and implies *Engagement*, can he offer to deny any more, that there is no *moral Truth* nor *Fitness* in that Positive? Can he, if he has any Ingenuity or Honour left, refuse, or delay to retract his Book full of such senseless false Accusations? For does the Understanding apprehend any Thing that carries more moral Rectitude with it, than *keeping Covenant*, and being *true to Engagement*? Or does the Will almost dare to recede from it? Or the Passions be any longer forward to rebel against it? And is not this Means and Method perfectly suitable and *congenerate* to all the Moral Powers and Efforts of Man for Production of Moral Righteousness in Thought, Word, and Deed?

3. IF the *Lord's Supper* is reflected upon with any due Attention, that will be found to be far from being a Mechanical Means of Grace, but on the contrary to be replete with rational Truth, and moral Fitness of Things. Our Author where, (as above) he denies the *Death of Christ* to be the Meritorious Cause, he is free to acknowledge it a *Moral Means* of Salvation; tho' I will do him Justice, that he means no more than so far as an *Example* the most perfect in all the World, is a moral Cause or occasion of imitating Righteousness; *that* is all the saving Virtue he allows in Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. But that is but one (perhaps the least) part of the *Remembrance of him dying and shedding his Blood for the Remissions of Sins*. If his *Example*, and our *Imitation* in Virtue, is the Principal, or the whole lasting Duty of the Remembrance, as he would fondly stint and confine it, tho' it is

is never once said or offer'd to the Communicant this is my Example, but this is *the New Covenant in my Blood*, or, as it is varied, this is *my Blood in the New Covenant, for the Remission of Sins*, then it ought to have been express'd, that Christ died *for our Virtues*, for *the Just*, not for our Sins, nor for the Unjust; if he solely and only died for what is to come after. A good Example has some relation to, and connexion with *Virtue*, so as to be said to be ordain'd for it; Sins stand in need of Propitiation, Atonement, Forgiveness, not Virtue; But how should the Example of one be an Atonement, Propitiation for, or Remission of the *past* Sins of another, it may possibly be an Inducement to *future* Obedience, but how does the same Example as such and no more, bring the needful Peace of Conscience and Satisfaction to the Mind, how *past* Disobedience is forgiven and remember'd no more against the Perseverer in, after sober, righteous and godly Living? This is forcing Sense upon Words, nor can it with any propriety be reconciled to the Expression of dying for Sins, or Forgiveness of, or being a Propitiation for them, or making our Peace with God; nor can any Figure of Speech, but that called Nonsense, make any Apology for it.

IN short *the Mediatorial Scheme* in the New Covenant, which is recogniz'd in the Lord's Supper, ordain'd by the Mediator of it purposely until his coming again, to preserve by that Method, and keep up in that Solemnity, our Relation to himself as *Mediator* of our Redemption and Intercession; is a most divine Scheme (not of Clerical, Hierarchical Invention)



tion) of the most profuse stupendous Love of Heaven, in conferring the greatest Benefits that God could bestow, or Man receive. If it is a Commemoration of the most inestimable Benefits, Favours, and Blessings, then the Scene of *Gratitude*, with all the Inducements and Obligations in the World, opens itself to the Heart of Man, surprizes his Attention, and delights his Remembrance. Than such Gratitude, such a bounden, such a willingness of Duty, can there possibly be laid a more Divine, more Godlike Scene for attracting Human Nature, for convincing a Rational Creature, or for prevailing upon a free moral Agent to do as he ought to do? Who can refuse such an Invitation leading and hastening him to Repentance? or not rejoice in seeing the Oppression of his guilty Fears taken off, and his Prayers carried up safe to the Throne of Grace, and there received with a clear Welcome, and all perfect Acceptableness? Upon Remembrance of so much Kindness, and so great a Benefactor thus dying for him, and of the New and better Covenant in his Blood for reception of accumulated Privileges and Blessings, filial Freedom, fearless Frailties of human Nature, and the Opening the Kingdom of Heaven and Glory to all Believers, who are honest sincere Doers; the *Understanding* of the devout Communicant is in raptures of Divine Sentiments, and yet is calm and undisturbed; his *Will* is captivated to Godliness and Duty; his *Love* and *Affections* in remembrance of so vast a Love and infinite Affection, confer'd, and still presiding over, is pre-ingaged to God and his Saviour, and not at liberty, for any long Time, to follow after Follies, or be led astray with the Delusion of false perishable Happiness.

Thus

Thus all the moral Powers of Man are center'd with a treble Vigour in the Pursuit of Righteousness, the Love of God and every Man, and in the steady Qualifications for his immortal Happiness. And if all this, with much more, is and certainly may be the happy Consequence of a due Participation of the Lord's-Supper, I hope it will for the sake of its intrinsic Excellence, be admitted by every body else, as a moral fitting Means, and in time, by our Author himself as a *congenerate* one, closely united to, and wholly desirous of, the Religion of the End; and I appeal to the Publick, whether if I, in my Turn, should call it a *generative* (moral) Means to that End, it would not much better express its good Effect and Design, than when he from denying it to be *congenerate*, denies it to have any Connexion to the End; which I have shewn to contain no less than two Falfhoods.

If a Raven, Sparrow, or Lily may be a moral Means, I might add *congenerate*, for improving Faith or Trust in God's Providence, why may not thinking upon the Bread and Wine in the Lord's-Supper, thinking upon the Command of receiving, thinking especially upon the End of receiving, be a moral and *congenerate* Means of preserving Faith in the Mediator, keeping up our Sense and Consciousness of the New Covenant, and of our Entrance and Engagement in it? But it surprizes one most of all to find this Author from our Saviour's Manner of *moralizing* Occurrences, multiplying Sacraments with the Papists, not only to seven but to seventy \*. When

\* Page 204.

at the same Time, he will not allow so much as *one* Sacrament upon any one *moral Account*, and particularly explodes the two Protestant Sacraments as being in his rash Opinion, and most censorious Temper, void of all Pretence of being any moral congenerate Means at all to the End of moral Righteousness. How thoughtless and superficial this is in so profound a Writer, let others judge.

AFTER denying roundly, that there is any Religion at all in Positives, he in one Passage speaks with some Diffidence\*. “If any Religion in positive Laws, it must consist in keeping close to the original Institution;” but he happens to be almost as much mistaken in this, as in the other. For if moral Truth, Reason, and Fitness mix with and preside over these Positives, what is of a moral Character is variable according to *Circumstances* as the Providence of God is pleased to vary them; and consequently the original Design of the two Sacraments may be punctually observ’d and complied with, though all the original Circumstances are not, nor perhaps cannot so well, for changeable providential Reasons, be punctually continued; but may nevertheless by human Prudence, which is always supposed to correspond to Divine Providence, be varied to the Approbation of God, where-ever he has superinduced a genuine undissembled Reason, for a prudential Alteration: in all such Cases the everlasting equitable Maxim, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, will be the Justification over the Face of the whole Earth.

\* See the Index to his Book, p. 110.

III. The *third* grand Topick of the Dialogue under Consideration is, the Compliments he abounds in every where, and makes a Present of to the *Clergy*. Every Reader will perceive that to be one of the chief Designs of writing, and a main Turn of his Book. With this View he affirms, by virtue of his own Authority, that the Sacraments were not intended as standing Laws of Christianity \*, though the Revelation expressly makes them so, and that Maxim with respect to Baptism and the *Jewish* Custom to the first Profelytes and their Descendants, *if the Root is holy, so are the Branches* notwithstanding, as I have elsewhere made appear against a celebrated *Soci-nian*; he seems to appropriate Baptism to the Physician of the Body, a Regimen by way of *Cold Bath*, but of no spiritual Use †. That the Clergy, however, have no Part nor Lot in the Matter ‡, though the Nature of Things evinces the contrary, from the Confusion of what is every Bodies Business is no Bodies; Order must arise, and some particular Persons must successively be appointed. So that his true Aim at the Positives seems to be levelled at *them*, to take them down, find them nothing to do, and so kick up their Heels, and push them clear off the Stage of Christendom, as utterly useles in their Generation. For he supposes every Man sufficient to teach himself Morality (the entire Gospel of Christ and Purport of all Revelation as he would make it) by the congenerate means of *Attention* in his own Hand; at that hopeful Prospect he seems to rejoice greatly, and hug

\* Page 104.

† Page 110.

‡ Page 104.



himself very much. But is it not a very hard Case upon them, to make all their Sermons to be *necessary Nonsense*, as before cited, when perhaps nine Parts in ten of the Sermons of the Clergy he so bitterly inveighs against are really upon the Ends of Religion, the *moral* Subjects he so much extols, and will only allow to shew their Heads in any Pulpit. To rail at them of every Denomination, without Distinction\*, yet elsewhere to admit a Distinction between wise and honest, and those that are otherwise†, looks as if fury had distracted his Head, confounded his Words, betrayed him in his Genius for scolding, and would certainly rob and disappoint him also of the Effect of it. The *Popish* Clergy, it is too true, get all their Dominion by their Notion of Propitiation, because they make themselves the efficacious Hands of Absolution: Yet without distinguishing, he avers against Fact, that these Positives or instituted Parts of Religion are *very* beneficial to the Clergy including *Protestant*‡. But the Question is, whether they could well have less than they have, suppose them set a-part by the State, to preach nothing else but moral Righteousness, *i. e.* his Gospel. To indulge his satyrical Temper (which *Theophanes* who knows him well distinguishes him for, making it, “ as necessary to him as Breathing, “ and that he can no more live without it, than “ without daily Bread, or natural Food||,) especially upon a fashionable Topick, may be a little excusable from his great Desire of being in the Mode with your thoughtless kind of People. But to call them *Knaves, Cheats, Impostors, &c.*

\* Page 435.

† Page 431.

‡ Page 199, 177.

|| Page 87.

indiscriminately

indiscriminately and from Generation to Generation, without Proof that all are so, I wish it may not be accounted a little Wickedness in, or a very great Contradiction to, a *Moral Philosopher*; but to judge and declare them all to be *Hypocrites* for not believing what they profess to believe, is not only to rob Man of his Character, but God also of his incommunicable one of Knowing the Heart, and so upon the Ruins of all good Manners to mount up to Impiety itself. But I pray God Almighty to forgive him all Sins against his Divine Majesty, as well as against Man and his Indigencies, whatsoever he has folded up under the Title of a *Moral Philosopher*, and give him a Sense to repent of them, under a better and truer Sense of the Nature of God, and Man. And now in Conclusion, let me a little expostulate with this strange Writer, in the Name of God, and Man.

How can you justify your Book before either, in thus presumptuously *dismembring* the Revelation of the one, and robbing (I wont say feloniously) the other of *his Peace of Conscience*, the greatest certainly that bears the Name of P E A C E, or the Heart of Man can have any value for? All Revelation from Heaven is founded in a *New Covenant*, for the Comfort and Consolation of Mankind, as well as his Instruction; but the Consideration of either Old, or New Covenant is shut out of your Scheme: And so is the *Mediator* of the *New Covenant* in all respects, except bare naming him once under that Character\*, without ever putting him to any use, or assigning him any thing to do in such a Station. This is a most miserable, disconsolate Chasm in your System of Salvation, A *Mediator* between God

\* Page 396.

and Man, supposes both Parties at variance ; and in order to an effectual Reconciliation, some real Propitiation, Atonement, or Satisfaction to be negotiated by this Mediator, such as is suitable, in the first Place, to the Honour of God, and becoming the Dignity of his Laws to accept ; and then, in the next Place, such as may give the *best Assurance and Pledge* unto Man, that his *past Sins* will be forgiven, upon Condition of doing his Duty for the future, to the best of his Power, conforming to those easy Terms, and regularly applying to those Means, Aids, Motives, Helps and Instruments prescribed by the Mediator, which he has laid down for his Assistance, and recommended to his Benefit entirely ; that he may be enabled to do the Will of God, and not falling short of the Qualifications for his Favour, may live in solid Peace of Conscience with him in this Life, and in eternal Happiness in the next. But in your disconcerted, disfigured Scheme, the Mediator does in no Sense, that Words can bear, make our Peace with God, or become a Propitiation, or die for our Sins, for the Forgiveness or Remission of them, or bring any such Comfort unto Man : Man does every Thing of that Kind without his *Mediation*. He neither *superintends* the Means, Aids, Motives, Helps and Instruments of Reconciliation, nor has any thing to do with them, I mean by Motives in the Sense I have already treated of them ; you make nothing transferable from, or allow any Intercourse with this Mediator, but his Instruction and *Example* in the moral Law of Righteousness. His Death with you is altogether for Example of *Suffering* for Righteousness, or *Testimony* of the Truth of his Doctrine ; you suppose also his Life an Example of well-doing, that is the *Ultimatum*, the

!! . . . whole

*whole* of your defective Saviour, your sorry, your no Mediator. You raise him indeed from the Dead ; but that has nothing to do with your Method of saving the World, unless Man by *imitating* him can be able to raise himself also from the Dead : but you deny or dissemble the true End and Reason of his Resurrection, *viz. he rose again for our Justification*, that he might appear before all the World to have *conquer'd* our last Enemy, Death, in our Nature (as well as to have foretold his own Rising again, neither of which any other did, besides himself, who had been raised from the Dead) to dissolve that Wages of Sin with Honour and Justice, and to have made our Peace with God. You confess him to be a moral Means of our Salvation, but deny him to be a *meritorious* Cause in any respect. But how can his Resurrection in the Body be a *moral* Means of our Resurrection in it, without which there is no Salvation ? Who is the Raiser of the Dead, but He who is *the Resurrection and the Life* ? He must therefore be a meritorious Cause of that Hopes of Glory, and be invested with Power accordingly.

NEITHER can I find how you dispose of him after his Rising ; you give him no *Ascent* to Heaven, you place him not at the *Right Hand* of God, you afford him no longer *Power* over us, nor impart any *farther Concern* for us. You wont have this Man to reign over us, you tie up his Hands (as far as you have the Power) from being our *Judge* or *Rewarder*, our *Lord* or *King*, our *Intercessor* or *Advocate*. And don't you thereby cruelly and wilfully deprive Mankind of the *greatest Consolations* ; God of the *Glory* of that condescending Dispensation ; and Christ of his *Right and Conquest, Rule and Regimen, Benefits*



*needs and Patronage towards Men? The Scripture says the Messiah or Mediator, shall make Reconciliation for Iniquity, be cut off, stricken, not for himself, but for the Transgression of the People: You contradict it, and maintain that he was cut off upon his own Account. The Scripture says, if any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is a Propitiation for our Sins; and there is certainly some designed Aid, and furtherance from that Faith presiding over our best Endeavours, our Repentance, and Prayers, for getting the Mastery over our Sins, securing our Peace with God, and Sense of his Favour, above what Example can afford. Human Nature is confessedly in Distress and Despondency, not knowing how to extricate itself from the Mire and Filth of Sin without some to lend a Hand to help, and save: Revelation presents such a Saviour and Deliverer, qualified in all Respects to render our own Endeavours comfortable, and make them effectual to that End; but you either out of a Spirit of Contradiction, or Envy, will suffer nothing to be proposed from this Saviour, but his bare Example or good Advice; as if a Man that was not in, by mere speaking and nothing else, could help another out of a Ditch. You neither admit him with St. Paul whom you so much extol, as High Priest of our Profession, having a fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, nor that he maketh Intercession for us, nor that we shall stand before his Judgment Seat. Your Character of that Apostle is, "That he was the great  
 " Free-Thinker of his Age, the bold and brave  
 " Defender of Reason against Authority, in opposition to those who had set up a wretched  
 " Scheme of Superstition, Blindness, and  
 " Slavery,*

Slavery, contrary to all Reason, and Common Sense." \* Yet this Apostle gloried in the *Cross of Christ*, in the *saving* Benefit of his *Death and Resurrection*, in his *Mediation* and *Intercession* for us, all which you are ashamed of, and banish out of your New Project: you neither permit Christ to appear there as a Mediator of Redemption, or a Mediator of Intercession, and so totally and compleatly set aside the *Mediatorical Scheme* by him, and with that the most valuable Purpose, Truth, and Design of the Holy Scriptures. What sort of a Thinker are you? or what kind of Reason is it that you set up to defend against the Authority, plain Expression, common Apprehension of *St. Paul*, and all the Apostles? You are jealous, but without any Cause, of your Moral Law of Nature, as if Christianity had any *ill* Design against it; whereas the true Design of it is known where-ever that is known; *I came not destroy the Law but to fulfil it*. Yet your Scheme and Amendments of the Gospel shew no *Resentment* in God for the breach of *that* Law; which looks as if it was calculated to favour those Breaches of it which are so agreeable to your new Friends the *Deists*; Can that be consistent with your Zeal for the Moral Law, or is that verbal Zeal any thing more than Affectation, or better than mere Pretence? and yet upon notorious Breaches of it, after the trifling Ceremony of Baptism, as you reckon it, you are so unkind, as to drive them into Despair, and allow them no Repentance, as I observ'd above. And you seem to make good another Observation that I have formerly made, that the *Deist* by his Game against Scripture and Christianity, plays

into the Hand of the *Papist*, in those Parts of your Book where you run down the Doctrine of the *Reformers* in gross without distinction (though they were not all of one Mind) as the greatest and grossest Absurdity, and that the learned *Jesuits* took great Advantage of it, and put a stop to the Reformation. \*

WHILST you would frustrate the most just and generous Religion in the World, drawn as it is both from the *true Nature* of God, and Man; and therefore equally and openly consults the Authority, Dignity and Honour of the former, as the Capacity, Frailty, and guilty Fears of the latter; you make no Provision, present no Consolation, or curative Part, but your vain Presumption upon the natural Goodness of God, in despite of his covenanted Goodness and Methods of Mercy in the Mediator, in relief of the Trouble and Anxieties of human Mind for transgressing the Law of Nature, and escaping the Guilt of past Iniquity, which yet will be the most pungent to it, whilst it preserves its Reason. That *Christ Jesus came into the World to save repenting Sinners*, is comfortless and insipid, and worthy of no manner of Acceptation upon your Hypothesis. You feed and stretch the Hopes of Mankind with eternal Life and Immortality being the Gift of God, but you falsify that very Gospel, and suppress the Truth of its being *through Jesus Christ*, in order the better to intercept any Dependence upon him for it, tho' he obtain'd it for us. You flatter also your own Fears, and the Fears of others, as if the Punishment of Hell was no more to be dreaded than an *Annihilation*. † But how

\* Page 404.

† Page 400, 401.

much God is averse to that Experiment of his Power, and stedfastly inclin'd to our Continuance in Being, after he has put us upon the Stage of it, is plain by all the Methods he has taken, and from the constituent Parts of our Frame. But it is vastly absurd in a *Philosopher* to talk of *Annihilation*; it is so with respect to *Matter*, whose Life consists in its continual Changes and varying Shapes; with respect to Spirits, we have less reason to imagine that God should be reduced to that strait, for want of Room in his Universe. In short, *Annihilation* is the Fool's Paradise of Infidelity, after that is once made the Retreat of a Life buried in Sensuality. You admit, strange Supposition from a Deist! the Origin of Sin in our World, or the Apostacy of Man owing to the previous Apostacy of Angels; and that owing to Idolatry.\* Here you receive Revelation, for you can have it no where else, and stretch it at the same time to your Fancy; you receive and believe the true History of Man's spiritual Distemper, but the Skill of the Physician would have been better seen, in admitting the subsequent Part of the said Revelation, as it is a Prescription for healing the same, without bold Alteration, or equally dangerous Innovation; for it is now the Fashion of distinguishing the good Judgment of a *Physician* by adhering most closely to the most Ancient, the first, and, in his way, divine *Master*. It can't be justified to the Faculty, to admit a Book of Health and Salvation in Part, and reject it in Part, when all that read it, perceive the two Parts to be inseparable and essentially connected together. But through your peculiar Art and unheard of Presumption, as before-

\* Page 231.



mention'd, of *interpolating* † where, and when, and what you please; no Mortal can tell what Part you like, or whether you are really affected to any Part at all, or if you should be so to some Part To-day, whether you would continue to be so To-morrow. For by that unbounded Liberty, it is plain, you may make any thing out of any ancient Scripture; and you yourself, by your fastidious Discernment, and expurgatory Genius, shall become the Author of all the Books, of all the Sentiments that have existed before you. This new extraordinary *external* Advantage that you assume over the Word (written to instruct and correct you,) to what Purposes you please to press it into your Service, is equivalent to the *Quakers* *internal* Advantage of making what they please of the same, to serve their turn; and so renders it as vain to argue with one, as the other, out of the same Book, with any hopes of Conviction.

VERY much more might be added, if I had not stinted myself in room, and had not, by this time, grown weary of answering an Author of such a Temper, and of so strange and unaccountable a Composition as this Book speaks him to be of. If these Hints may provoke some great Genius to enlarge against him; I have my Ends. I have offer'd in the *Two Volumes*, and this *Appendix*, what I think sufficient in my Judgment, and hope will appear so, in the Judgment of others, for convincing any *reasonable* Man; and that is, and *shall* be enough to say to this Writer.

\* Page 440.

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| Page | Line | ERRATA.           |     | Read       |
|------|------|-------------------|-----|------------|
| 5    | 7    | for the aforesaid | —   | for any    |
| 11   | 27   | after that        | — — | a          |
| 26   | 3    | Intender          | — — | Entendre   |
| 35   | 6    | Harmonies         | —   | Harmonizes |



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- I Sam. ii. 25. If one Man sin against another, God shall Judge him; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? Vol. I. 212.
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